ONCE BOUGHT, ALWAYS BOUGHT.

SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON (OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 294.—Vol. XI. FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 18, 1894. [Price One Penny.

PLUMTREE'S HOME-POTTED MEATS

For the BREAKFAST, LUNCHEON, TEA, and SUPPER TABLE.

Of all Grocers, &c.; or send 7½d. or 1/3 for Sample Jar to Maker—

PLUMTREE, SOUTHPORT.

It is not claimed that these Camomile Pills will cure all diseases, but they have 100 YEARS' REPUTATION for being UNEQUALLED and, indeed, UNAPPROACHED as a remedy for

NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS

INDIGESTION BILIOUSNESS LIVER COMPLAINTS
SICK HEADACHE DYSPEPSIA A Splendid Tonic and Gentle Aperient.

MILD IN OPERATION, PERFECTLY SAFE, AND FREE FROM INJURIOUS DRUGS.

Sold in Bottles at 1/1½, 2/9, and 11/- each, by all Medicine Vendors throughout the World.

Ask for "NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS," and do not be persuaded to purchase an imitation.

Prepared by NORTON'S LIMITED, 21, Spital Square, London, E.

BEETHAM'S
WORLD FAMED
CORN & BUNION PLASTER

Boxes, 1s. 1½d., of all Chemists, or post-free, for 14 stamps from the Proprietors,
M. BEETHAM & SON, Chemists,
CHELTENHAM.

IS THE BEST REMEDY EVER DISCOVERED.

It acts like magic in relieving all pain and throbbing, and soon cures the most obstinate corns & bunions. It is especially useful for reducing enlarged Great Toe Joints, which so spoil the symmetry of otherwise beautiful feet. **Thousands have been cured, some of whom had suffered for fifty years without being able to get relief from any other remedy.** (It is a thin plaster, and takes up no room in the boot.) A trial of a Box is earnestly solicited, as immediate relief is sure.

THREE HALF CROWNS

IT IS A STARTLING FACT

that **Three Half-Crowns (7/6)** will purchase a beautiful **SERGE DRESS LENGTH** in any of the following colours:—Black, Blue, Brown, Green, Claret, Nut Brown, Chestnut, Mulberry, Ruby, Red, Moss, Olive, Myrtle, Bronze, &c, also several very pretty and effective mixtures.

Full Dress Length (Carriage Paid) FOR **7/6**

Money returned if not approved.

20,000 Sets of Patterns now ready, write at once. Patterns are sent Post Free and need not be returned.

These beautiful Serges are specially manufactured for Autumn and Winter wear, elegant in appearance and are not heavy as most Serges are. They will not spot with rain or wear threadbare.

£5,000 to be Given Away in Presents to Purchasers.

Thousands of Testimonials from all parts of the World.

Cloth Table Covers, 2 yds. square, 4s. 9d. each, in Crimson, Claret, Tan, or Emerald. Remnant Bundles of Serge, 5s. and 10s. each, carriage paid. Write to-day for Patterns of Dress Materials, post free to any address. (Dept 21)

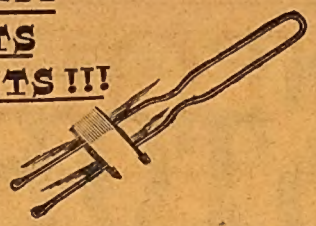
LUTAS LEATHLEY & CO., The Dress Warehouse, Armley, Leeds.

PREVENTS COLDS AND CHILLS

BOVRIL

THE BEST AND CHEAPEST STOCK FOR SOUP.

A HAIR PIN
WITHOUT POINTS
HAS GOOD POINTS !!!
SEE THE POINT ?



Hinde's "Pyr Point" Hair Pin.

SAMPLES FREE ON RECEIPT OF POST CARD.

CAN'T SCRATCH THE HEAD, AND WON'T FALL OUT.

THEY COST YOU EXACTLY SAME PRICE AS OLD SORT.

EACH STORE AND WAREHOUSE KNOWS ALL ABOUT THEM.

Hindes Ltd., MANUFACTURERS OF *BRUSHES* & TOILET ARTICLES. *BIRMINGHAM & LONDON.*

AJAX BEST AND CHEAPEST

Write to-day for our 200 page **Illustrated Lists.** Post Free, containing 5,000 Testimonials, and particulars of over 1,000 New and Second-hand PNEUMATIC, CUSHION, and SOLID TYRE SAFETIES, TRICYCLES and BICYCLES.

CYCLES MACHINES SENT CARRIAGE PAID

Prices, £4 to £30. Easy Terms from 10s. per Month. Large cash Discount. Cycles bought, sold, and exchanged. Tuition Free in our London and Liverpool Schools. Non-purchasers perfect riding, 10s. 6d. **BRITISH CYCLE MANUFACTURING CO.** LIVERPOOL: 45 EVERTON ROAD. LONDON: 42 HIGH STREET, CAMDEN TOWN, N.W.

BALDNESS CURED in all its forms. Send stamped addressed envelope for Testimonials, Press Criticism, and valuable Pamphlet, containing Chapters on Baldness, Loss of Hair, Greyness, Superfluous Hair, &c., with Advice Form for Treatment, to Dr. HORN, Hair Specialist, Newport, Isle of Wight.

BONNY, CHUBBY CHILDREN.

If you really want your children to be Bonny, Chubby, and Strong, with rosy cheek and pure firm flesh, give them

INFANTINA'S STRENGTHENING SYRUP.

Sold by Chemists at 1s. 1½d. per bottle, or, post free, from

THE INFANTINA CO., LONDON, S.W.

SEVEN PRIZE MEDALS.

These series of pens neither scratch nor spurt. They glide over the roughest paper with the ease of a soft lead pencil. A **6d.** assorted sample box of any stationer.

HAIR REMOVED permanently, root and branch, without injury to the skin. Particulars on receipt of stamped directed envelope. G. S. COLLINS, Imperial Mansions, Oxford Street, London, W.C.

To Tobacconists Commencing.

£20 See Illus. Guide. 259 pp. 3d. "How to open a Cigar Stores from £20 to £1,000." "TOBACCONISTS' CO.," 186, Euston Road, London. Manager — H. Myers. Estab. 1866. *N.B.*—Shopfitters and Show Case Makers for all trades. ESTIMATES FREE.

FOR YOUTHFUL APPEARANCE. BEAUTIFUL HAIR.

BRODIE'S IMPERIAL HAIR DYES, &c.

(REGISTERED) ONE LIQUID

No. 1 ... Black
No. 2 ... Dark Brown
No. 3 ... Light Brown
No. 4 ... Golden Brown or Auburn
No. 5 ... Pure Golden

No. 6 ... Imperial Hair Grower

Harmless, Perfect, Permanent and Odourless. Clear, no Sediment.

2/6, 3/6, 5/- & 10/6 (SECRETLY PACKED)
J. BRODIE, 41, Museum Street, London.
Established 1868. Once Tried, Always Used.

A SIGNAL SUCCESS.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it."

THE PEARSON POTTERY CO.,
HANLEY,

Are Selling Fast the Most Wonderful Package of Crockery in the World.

100 Pieces

for £1 1s. 0d.

A beautiful Dinner Service of 50 pieces is guaranteed **Worth the Guinea alone,** consequently a Charming China Tea Service, and a useful Collection of Crockery, are given **FOR NOTHING.**

Thousands sold all over the world. Everybody not only satisfied but amazed at the quantity and quality given.

The Secret of the Success.—The PEARSON POTTERY COMPANY are manufacturers, not middlemen, like many other advertisers. The PEARSON POTTERIES have nearly 2,000 feet frontage to the town of Hanley.

Hundreds of these packages are applied for as **Wedding or Birthday Presents.** And what more useful present can be given? Every item is useful.

The Thirty Shilling Bazaar Parcel is selling well. Apply at once.

Send a Post Card for Particulars. You will never regret it. Freedom from breakage guaranteed. All letters to the

PEARSON POTTERY COMPANY, HANLEY.

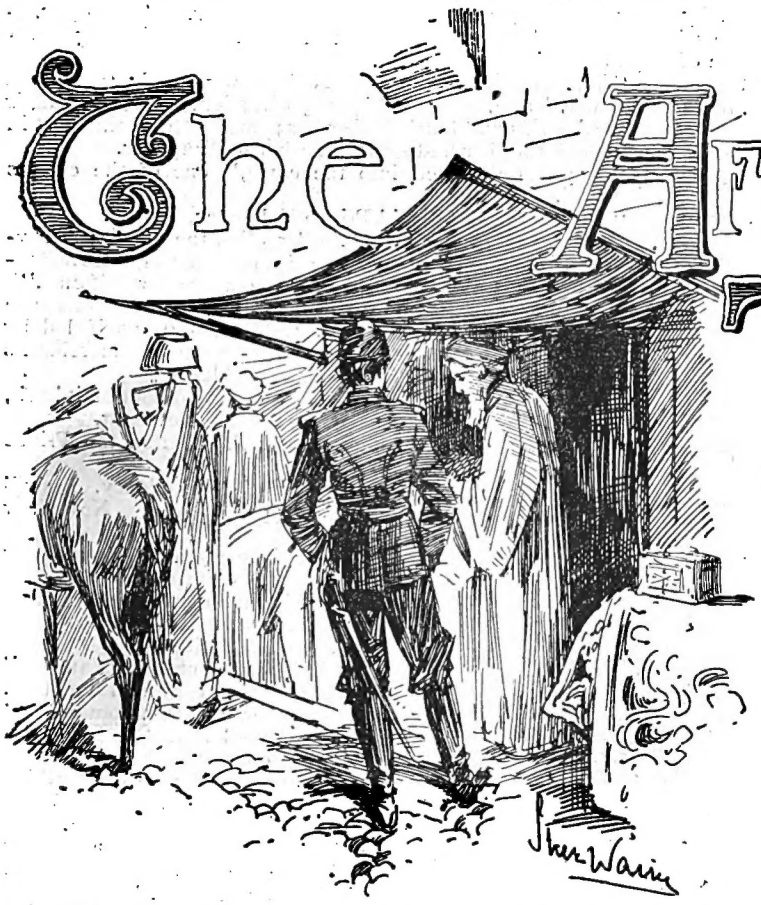
Digitized by Google

SHORT STORIES.

EDITED BY C. ARTHUR PEARSON.

No. 294.—Vol. XI. *FOR THE WEEK ENDING AUGUST 18, 1894.* [PRICE ONE PENNY.

The Afghan's Turquoise



SAMARCAND possesses in perfection the peculiarities of the Oriental cities so well described in the marvellous stories of the Thousand and One Nights. It is an aggregation of low buildings enclosed in whitewashed walls, its bazaars teeming with specimens of all that Asia can offer of different types and colours of the human race, from milk-white through clear yellow and saffron to ebon black.

The merchandise there displayed is as diverse as the people—simple calabashes, fashioned out of the shell of the cocoa-nut, coming from the Indian Ocean; vases of enamelled silver from the Caucasus; primitive bridles of half-tanned leather thongs; gorgeous saddles and caparisons, covered with turquoises set in unalloyed gold; and clothes of Russian make, side by side with Oriental stuffs woven in marvellous colours that delight the eye.

In the midst of the bright scene was a group of Russian officers, mounted on the lithe-limbed ponies of the steppes—beautiful beasts, full of intelligence, though only half tamed as yet. As the officers passed through the bazaar, they stopped here and there to examine, sometimes to purchase some article that struck their fancy—a chibouk, with a long, jasmine wood stem, wound with gold and bright-hued silk; shoes, gay with multi-coloured mosaics of Morocco, or strangely figured dressing-gowns from Bokhara.

All Rights Reserved.

One of these officers stopped at the little show-case in which a merchant displayed his most precious wares, and examined a necklace formed of large beads of ambergris and musk, with a great turquoise, cut in the form of a pyramid, hung at its apex. The stone was of a magnificent blue—the blue of the sky after a shower, so pure, so soft, that the sight of it was a caress to the eye.

"How much?" asked the officer, indicating the necklace.

"Five hundred English pounds, not a penny less," replied the shopman, a Persian merchant, attired in an elegant gown of violet silk, embroidered with gold and silver thread.

"Come, come; no joking. You ask too much," said the officer, who had adopted the invariable Eastern custom of haggling over any and all bargains.

"You need not take it," said the Persian; "in fact, I could not sell it to you now. Perhaps in five days I may be able to let you have it. I promised to keep it that long. The person from whom I had it stipulated that time in which to buy it back."

"Indeed!" said the officer, descending from his horse to examine the ornament more closely; "and who is this person?"

"A woman, and a very beautiful one. She belongs to the harem of an Afghan emir, who has gone to Cabul and is expected back any day now. She was obliged to pawn the stone, finding herself out of money."

"A beautiful Afghan, eh?" broke in one of the other officers from his saddle; "we must see her. It might be possible to profit by the absence of the emir. What do you say, gentlemen?"

"I do not know where she lives," said the Persian, suddenly becoming very grave.

"Are you lying to us, you old rascal?" laughed the officer. "But come, we are blocking the wheels of trade, and all because of a turquoise and a woman. Come, Prince Voldemar, let us go on."

"Wait a moment," replied the officer to whom these words were addressed—he who had dismounted to examine the

Digitized by Google

turquoise; "I shall come to-morrow, alone," he added in the merchant's ear; "meanwhile, put this necklace aside and show it to no one. If the lady of whom you speak does not come, I shall buy it. The inscription pleases me: 'That which is past is a dream—that which remains, a desire.'"

"I shall obey your Highness," replied the Persian, as he received the ornament from the officer's white-gloved hands, and deposited it in an Indian coffer of green ivory, crusted with silver.

The officers departed at a gallop, amused at the fright of the peasants who fled before them, pressing themselves against the walls and shop fronts. Soon they emerged from the narrow street of the bazaar into a square surrounded by covered galleries, in the middle of which stood a basin of marble, green with age, in which played a little fountain of limpid water. The fountain was shaded by a roof sustained by slender columns of blue-enamelled porcelain, about which were twined dragons and serpents in relief.

"Where shall we go now?" asked one of the officers, turning towards the others. "We must find something to do."

"Easier said than done," returned one of his companions; "there is absolutely nothing to do in this dog's country. If the powers that be would only find us a little fighting to do, it would be a very welcome diversion."

"Yes, if we could kill a few Afghans once in a while, it would keep our livers in order. But no, we must simply sit down and wait."

While his companions railed at their fate, Prince Voldemar remained silent and pre-occupied, though he showed no less ennui than they in the pure and commanding lineaments of his handsome face. He had come to Asia a year before to lead an active military life; but, save a few skirmishes with Bokharan marauders, who were not even brigands, he had found nothing but the enervating existence of the Orient, in which life seems one long waiting for something that never comes.

Having a large revenue at his disposal, he had for a time amused himself by furnishing his house after the fashions of Central Asia. He had a Sartian salon, a Mongolian salon, an Indian work-cabinet where it was impossible to do anything but dream, a Rússian dining-room, furnished with heavy wooden furniture, painted and varnished in the ancient Muscovite style. His house was crowded to the ceiling with bibelots. He gave his companions entertainments after the fashion of the country; astonishing young women danced before him and gazed languishingly at him from beneath their Sartian veils, but not one of them had the fortune to fix his attention.

Astonishing young women danced before him.

A general brought out his daughter, a pretty little blonde, from the convent at Smolna. She married within the year—the favoured one being an adroit aide-de-camp of the General—and devoted herself to her duties as a young wife and soon as a young mother. The animation she had brought to her father's dinners and receptions, and the riding excursions into the country, ceased almost immediately after the wedding. Again the old question, "What shall we do to be amused?" presented itself. The young men drank and gambled, but Prince Voldemar, who cared neither for wine nor cards, relapsed into a state of inertia little better than melancholy.

Seated now by the fountain, gazing blankly at the tiny thread of water that shot up in its midst, he vaguely heard its gentle plash mingling with the complaints of his companions.

Suddenly a shadow fell on the sun-whitened square. The Prince raised his head and sought the object that could cause this purpling shadow. He beheld a grey horse, trotting quickly along, covered with a cloth of green and rose colour embroidered with silver, the bridle and head-stall starred with facets of onyx, on which were engraved verses from the Koran; at its breast shone an enormous stone of citron colour in a silver setting and a fringe of little balls of onyx, green, cream-coloured, red, and orange, embellished in rich trappings. At the side of the superb beast ran an Afghan servant, and gracefully installed in the red velvet saddle was a woman. She was carefully veiled from head to foot, her blue and gold garment falling in graceful folds about her. The horse traversed the square at a sharp trot and in the twinkling of an eye the vision disappeared.

"Who is that woman?" the officers wondered; "we must find out," and, delighted at any diversion, they turned their horses' heads and hurried after her; but the brief time lost in contemplating her had sufficed for her to disappear.

"She has vanished into the earth," one of the officers declared.

"Or into the sky," said Prince Voldemar.

"Always poetical, Prince," replied the officer; "however, it is dinner time and we are invited to the Governor-General's. We have just time to change our uniforms."

A few days later Prince Voldemar had his favourite mare, Smaragda (Emerald), saddled, and, as if led by the hand of fate, he returned to the Persian merchant's shop and asked for the turquoise necklace.

"The lady returned and bought it back, Excellency," replied the merchant.

"Confound the luck!" cried the Prince angrily.

"Console yourself, Excellency, I shall find another to please you. Now, how would this——"

The Prince glanced abstractedly at the stones the merchant spread before him in an onyx vase, pouring them out of a sack of rose-coloured silk, broidered with gold.

"There is not one so beautiful," he said, "and I wanted the other. Do you know who this woman is?"

"No, Excellency. She came here mounted on a grey horse, covered with a green and rose cloth, which I admired greatly, such as are made only at Homs, in Syria. She told me that her father had bought it for her on his return from a pilgrimage to Mecca."

"What's that you say?" cried the Prince. "It must be the same woman. Had she an Afghan with her?"

"Yes, Excellency; she was closely veiled, but as she counted the gold she gave me, she raised a corner of her veil, and I saw her superb eyes and a complexion like the petal of a white rose."

"I will give you two hundred roubles if you will find this woman and the turquoise for me."

"Excellency, how should I find them? I stay always in my shop, and I did not see which way she went. The city is large, and the houses are mysterious behind their walls. But I can commend to you a Jew who comes to buy merchandise in the bazaar to sell to the porters of the houses. He may be able to give you some information. Perhaps he knows this unknown. But be guarded, Excellency; if she be the wife of an Afghan, it will be dangerous to pursue this adventure. The Afghans have an evil name—and they are jealous."

"I fear no Afghans. Send me this Jew this evening," replied the Prince, remounting his horse.

In vain he rode slowly through the streets about the square, peering at the houses; no young Afghan woman appeared at any of the narrow windows. Only one daughter of India showed her wrinkled face on a high terrace, surrounded by a

Digitized by Google

lattice on which clambered a sweet-smelling jasmine. Prince Voldemar looked at her and called—which was quite enough to frighten her away. It was midday, and the burning sun had driven the hardiest within doors. The Prince, weary of his quest, determined to return to his house, feeling that he must cut a ridiculous figure as the only living being in this city of the Sleeping Beauty of the Wood.

He followed the narrow streets that led to his habitation; at the sound of his horse's hoofs the servants ran out and opened the gate, which gave entrance to a vine-covered gallery. The Prince stroked his horse's neck and entered the Sartian salon, which was lighted by a cupola of yellow glass, in discs like the bottoms of bottles. A table set in the Russian style awaited him; his great, white hound rose lazily from its couch on a tiger skin and leaned its head upon his knee for a caress.

The Prince ate quickly, and slipped on an Asiatic costume composed of trousers and a khalat of light Bokharan silk. Then he stretched himself out on a divan, and gave himself up to dreams of the turquoise and the mysterious beauty. The hours dragged slowly along; the servants were still, awaiting the commands of their master. The Prince fell into that condition of semi-somnolence that the Orientals call kieff, in which existence is suspended—one is half-asleep and half-awake, one knows that one lives and yet scarce lives. The Asiatic delights in this condition. The European endures it, but, at bottom, it wearies him and seems almost like some melancholy nightmare.

A breath of fresh air stirred the orange, citron, and pomegranate trees in the garden, and came in through the wide, arched door of the Sartian salon. The profound silence was broken only by the gentle song of a bird peculiar to China and Central Asia—a bird whose song seems pervaded with melancholy; it commences in a high key, which sinks by slow gradations to the bass notes, and forms a kind of despairing wail, which affects the hearer as an inexpressible sorrow.

At six o'clock the hound rose with a deep growl. A djighit appeared at the door: "A Jew craves talk with your Highness; he dares to say he is expected. Shall he be thrust into the street?"

"No; let him come in," replied the Prince quickly.

The Jew entered a few moments later. He advanced with low obeisance and stood respectfully a few paces from the Prince, glancing timidly from the Prince to the hound, which was showing its enormous white fangs.

"Highness, am I so blessed as to be of service to you?" he said, laying one hand on his skinny chest. He was clothed in a gown of lavender silk, worn by usage and faded by the sun. The two hooped earrings that hung beneath his turban trembled in his abjectness and timidity.

"The Persian has doubtless told you what I desire," said the Prince; "find me this woman and the turquoise. Can you do it?"

"Can I?" replied the Jew: "I could find you a needle lost in the sands at the ocean's shore; I could find it for you and I would bring it to you, by Moses and Aaron I swear it. Do you want the turquoise first or the woman?"

"Well—if I want the turquoise first?"

"Very good—I will steal it. What would I not do for so magnanimous a Prince, who deigns to make use of a poor Jew?"

"Can you do it—no lies, now!"

"May I never celebrate the Sabbath next week if I do not succeed," replied the Jew; "and, in the first place, I will venture to suggest to your Highness that, having the turquoise first, the pretext is provided for attracting the lady. As to returning the turquoise, that is your affair; but you can keep them both—the turquoise and the woman—if it please your Highness to do so."

"As to that, we shall see," responded the Prince; "I know the stone, and it pleases me. I do not know the woman—she remains to be seen."

"Then I crave permission to leave your Highness. This night, by two o'clock, you shall have the stone. One of my colleagues has entrance to many houses of the city, and this one should be of their number," and the Jew, renewing his obeisances, retired from the room.

The Prince remained for a moment in deep thought.

"I will return the turquoise," he said at last, "for it is only by robbery that this Jew can procure it—at least, if she will not give it to me."

It was only eleven o'clock when Prince Voldemar returned home from a reception at the Governor-General's house, but he found awaiting him the Jew, who offered him a carved sandal-wood box, in which lay the necklace and the turquoise.

"She lives in the street of the Sartians," said the Jew, without waiting for the Prince to recover from his surprise; "the second house from the Square of the Fountain."

"Let us go there, then—you shall show me the house—for I have no desire to sleep on such a brilliant moonlit night."

"Follow me, Excellency. But, pray, do not forget that at two hours before dawn I must pay the price of the theft to an old Hindoo woman who serves as laundress in the household of the Afghan lady, whose name is Adaita. The Hindoo is afraid the robbery will be discovered, and at daybreak she joins a caravan on its way to Cabul."

"How much do you want?" demanded the Prince.

"Two hundred English pounds for her and three hundred for me. It is very little, Excellency."

The Prince said not a word, but entered his bed-chamber. There he threw aside the fold of the many-coloured tapestries and disclosed the little iron door of a small safe built into the wall. Opening the safe he drew forth a handful of gold, which he thrust into his pocket, and then counted out five hundred pounds. Closing this secret repository and replacing the hangings so that they offered no suggestion of concealing an opening, he returned to the Sartian salon and paid the sum due to the Jew, who outdid himself in bows and thanks.

A few minutes later the Prince, mounted on a black Persian horse, and the Jew, astride of a modest ass, made their way, side by side, along the deserted streets of the sleeping city. The moon alone lit up the irregularly paved streets and the staring white walls of the houses.

They soon arrived before a house with an arched entrance of faience in mosaic. Within this arch, between two pillars of green marble, stood a heavy wooden door in which was a small iron-barred window. The Jew tapped lightly on the bars of the window and immediately a brown face appeared, mutely interrogating them.

"Djelana," said the Jew, "here are the two hundred pounds; you can leave with the caravan at dawn."

Djelana mumbled her thanks as she clutched the gold in her skinny hands.

"Is your mistress sleeping?" demanded the Prince.

"No, she is on the terrace. Listen and you will hear her guzla and her song."

A strange melody floated gently towards them from the garden, and they heard a sweet voice singing an Afghan love song, a passionate lament for the absent. The Prince frowned as he caught the meaning of the song—he was jealous already.

"I wish to see her," he declared briefly to the Hindoo woman. "You may go, but leave the gate open and I will enter. You need have no fears for yourself."

The Hindoo woman held out her brown hand. The Prince dropped half a dozen gold pieces into it.

"Enter," said she, "but let me escape," and passing quickly between the horse and the ass, she disappeared round the corner of the street.

"Excellency," said the Jew, spurring up his beast, "may good luck attend you. I have performed what you required of me; I can be of no further service to you. In fact, my ass need bray but once to arouse the neighbourhood.

"Go, you cowardly knave!" muttered the Prince, and making his horse enter the court of the house, he tied it to a ring in the wall and closed the door securely behind him to prevent a surprise. After an instant's search he found a little flight of blue faience steps leading up to the terrace, whence still came the sounds of the guzla. Ascending these steps, he found himself on the terrace, which was covered with white Indian cloths and lit by the moon, which glittered on his silver epaulets and aiguilets.

With a cry of terror, a young woman rose hurriedly from

Digitized by Google

The turquoise, which she took as if in a dream.

couch at the end of the terrace. The officer bowed respectfully before her.

"You need have no fear of me," he said: "permit me to approach you—I shall not advance one step without your permission."

The young woman stared at him with terror in her great dark eyes. She was dressed in a garment of light gauze, which enveloped her supple figure like a transparent cloud. Her arms, bare to the shoulder, were extended before her in a gesture of alarm. Her black tresses fell in heavy waves to her little feet, which were shod in slippers of orange velvet.

The Prince sank upon one knee and laid his hand upon his heart and upon his forehead after the Oriental custom.

"What seek you; what do you want? Allah, Allah, what is this man?"

"What I seek," replied the Prince, "is your love. Since I saw you, some days ago, I have suffered much. Before I had seen you I loved you. I am he who wished to acquire your turquoise at no matter what price. I have it—here it is."

"What! Why—how?" stammered Adaita.

"I had it stolen from you, and I bought it to return it to you. Will you receive it again?"

Adaita evidently feared to advance, so the Prince rose and handed her the turquoise, which she took as if in a dream.

"Unhappy man," said she, "I am married. If my husband should return he would kill us both. Why did you come here? The Afghan women are not for you Russians. Save yourself while there is yet time."

"What is life to me without you?" replied the Prince. "I shall remain."

"Oh, what can you be thinking of? I am lost! Do you see that ruddy line in the east? It is the coming dawn, and my servants will soon be astir. Go, I implore you. My husband has left six Afghans at home; they will murder you. And what is this?—your horse in the courtyard! Come quickly, and fly!"

Terror lent wings to her feet; she flew down the stairs, followed by the Prince, and unfastened the horse with her little jewelled hands.

"Save yourself; go, I implore you!" she cried, and she ran to the gate and flung it open.

The Prince leaped into the saddle.

"I go," he said, "but not without you," and giving her no time for reflection he lifted her before him on the saddle and set out at a gallop for his own house.

That morning, at sunrise, to the consternation of the servants of the Afghan's house, they found the gates of the court-yard open and their mistress gone—disappeared utterly. The Afghan servitor, whose duty it was to accompany the lady on her excursions about the city, signalled to his companions to be silent. Bending over the pavement, he sought for traces of the flight. Here and there, in the interstices between the stones, the sand retained the imprint of a horse's iron-shod hoofs. He emerged from the courtyard and continued his search, never missing the slightest sign. That evening he returned.

"I know where she is," he said; "let us wait for the master's coming."

Meanwhile the Prince was trying to tame the wild dove he had caught. He overwhelmed her with attention and caresses. She ensconced herself in a corner of the divan in the Sartian salon, and would listen to nothing. The Prince gave out that he was ill and would see no one, in order not to be disturbed. To be loved by her, to feel her arms creeping about his neck, to rest her head upon his breast, and kiss her long, silky hair—the Prince would have given his life to experience that sensation of soft delight. He passed the whole day on his knees before his idol; he kissed her feet, but she drew them back affrighted.

"Let me go home," she said; "give me my liberty. I am accursed to be loved by a Christian. I am afraid—I am afraid," and she hid her face in her hands, which he tried to draw away, imploring her to have pity on him. He wept, he sobbed at her feet. His love grew only the stronger, and he neither slept nor ate.

"I am alone and miserable," he cried. "I shall die without your love. Have pity on me! You will soon love me."

Night fell, and the Persian lanterns were lit, and cast a ruddy glow on the rugs and divans. Adaita was tired, languid, worn by the struggle against this handsome young man, who burned her with his breath, clasped her with his nervous hands. He drew her, trembling, toward him.

The Prince's head, with its crisp curls, bent toward her, he kissed her long and passionately, and they were both sinking in a dream of love, when they were startled by a sudden knock on the door.

"Your Highness," said the voice of a djighit, "an Afghan wishes to speak with you. He comes from the Governor-General, and says he cannot wait."

The Prince did not reply at once. He covered Adaita with kisses.

"Your Highness! your Highness!" cried the djighit.

"Yes, I am coming," replied the Prince, gently letting Adaita sink back upon the sofa; "I shall return immediately, my darling, my adored one," he whispered.

He entered his work-cabinet and saw an Afghan whom he did not know.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

The Afghan handed him a note:

"What is this the Emir tells me, my dear Prince?" (the Governor wrote).

'I shall return immediately.'

Digitized by Google

"A woman carried off—at your house? Give her up at once and rid me of this scandal."

"I am waiting," said the Emir, "to kill her. You will understand, Prince, that my wife, having spent a whole day here, is no longer worthy of a true Mohammedan."

The Prince looked at the Emir—a superb warrior, bronzed, with brilliant black eyes and a proud and energetic air; he wore a robe of white cloth embroidered with gold, his green turban was made of costly cashmere and an arsenal of arms, studded with emeralds, rubies and sapphires, thrust in his sash.

"Do you think I shall give her up to you that you may assassinate her? You are mad," replied the Prince, anger and jealousy getting the better of him.

"Then it is you whom I shall kill!" cried the Afghan, drawing his scimitar.

His soul winged its way into the infinite, while his limp body rolled at the feet of the fair Afghan.

The Prince had barely time to spring to a trophy of arms on the wall and seize a yatagan. But the Afghan scimitar, more prompt, fell upon his left arm, making an ugly gash.

"Ah, you would strike me unarmed!" cried the Prince; "now, defend yourself, I shall give no quarter."

The Afghan cast a glance about him and his eye fell on a low table of nacre in the middle of the room, covered with rare bibelots. The Prince saw that it was in the way and with one hand tossed it into the garden. At the crash of its fall a number of djighits rushed into the room and were about to throw themselves upon the Afghan.

"Go! Leave me with this man!" cried the Prince; "I command you."

The djighits retired.

The Afghan took up his stand in the corner of the salon, facing the garden door. He was in the shadow, while the moon threw a white light on the marble pavement of the terrace and the arches about the garden, against which the Prince's figure made a black silhouette.

The combat began with a few passes, in which each tried the other's mettle, the Afghan's scimitar always meeting a firm guard in the Prince's yatagan. Then both drew back to resume the combat with new fury. The Afghan stooped and sought to bring the Prince down by wounding him in the leg. The latter divined this intention let him succeed and, at the same time, drove his weapon into the Afghan's chest till the blood spurted. But, in spite of this wound, the Afghan hurled himself on the Prince and gave him a deep cut in the side; but, in the darkness, he did not see the point of the yatagan concealed in the shadow of the Prince's body, and fell upon it with all his weight. The combat was at an end.

Prince Voldemar, himself dripping with blood, called his djighits.

"Deliver up this body to the Emir's suite," he directed, "and dress my wounds quickly and wash away this blood."

Half an hour later he re-entered the salon where Adaita awaited him. An immense vase of roses filled the room with perfume. The Prince selected a flower and offered it to the young woman. A drop of blood fell from his forehead upon the rose.

"What is that?" cried the startled Adaita.

"It is nothing—a mere scratch on my forehead. A caress from you will cure it," and, sinking upon the divan, he rested his head on the young woman's shoulder.

"Ah, how happy I am," he murmured, with a deep sigh; "you are mine at last, mine alone—my soul, my star, my adored one."

He drew toward him the charming, anxious face of Adaita and exhaled his last breath in a supreme kiss. His soul winged its way into the infinite, while his limp body rolled at the feet of the fair Afghan.

When the djighits entered the Sartian salon in the morning, they found only the corpse of Prince Voldemar, already cold in death. Adaita had disappeared. In spite of all inquiries she was never found. It was thought that she joined one of the caravans then passing through Samarcand on their way to Mecca, and, as a veiled woman is sacred to all Moslems, she was not recognised.

THIS HOUSE TO LET.

"YES," said old Mrs. Pounce, nodding her orange-coloured cap-strings, "they put me in—the House Agency did—to take care of the house, with a bright-painted 'To Let' stuck up in front of the area windows, and coal and house rent free. Which I don't deny, my dear, is an object to a lone female like me, with neither chick nor child, and my own way to make in the world, with fine laundressing out of the question on account of rheumatism in the finger-joints.

"'You seem like a respectable person, Mrs. Pounce, that has seen better days?' was what the house agent said, when he handed me over the keys. 'I think we may trust you to take good care of our doorsteps and windows, show applicants over the house, and answer all questions.'

"'You may so, sir,' says I, with a curtsey; 'there's many houses I've had charge of, and never a fault has been found yet. And this shan't be the first one,' says I.

"'We've a large business,' says Mr. Eagle, 'and if you give satisfaction, Mrs. Pounce,' says he, as civil spoken as possible, 'it's likely you'll never be without a roof to your head.'

"Well, my dear, of all nice houses—and I've seen a many in my day—this was the nicest. Stone front, with a bay window and snug garden planted with box borders, hot and cold water throughout, a little conservatory with an arched glass roof at the rear, and the hall floor covered with real painted tiles, which made you think you were walking on pictures; walls painted with Cupids and Venuses and garlands of flowers. Neighbourhood most desirable; drainage and sewerage perfect; and churches conveniently near.

"Excuse me, my dear, if it sounds like an advertisement, but Mr. Eagle wrote it down for me, and I never rested until I'd committed it to memory, so I could speak it off easy like,

Digitized by Google

without any stops or hitches. And this I will say, as can't be said of all advertisements, there wasn't a word in the agent's description but what the house bore out.

"And the board hadn't been up twenty-four hours before there was a rush to look at the house. Young married couples as wanted to give up apartments, old married folks as wasn't suited with their homes; boarding-house keepers as made believe they was private families, and private families as wanted to take a few select boarders. But the rent was up tolerably high, and most of 'em dropped off, after I'd named the sum.

"'Never mind, Mrs. Pounce, never mind,' says Mr. Eagle, rubbing his hands. 'It's a house that there'll be no difficulty in letting, without any reduction of rent. Just wait,' says he, 'till the spring sets in.'

"But one day in trots an old gentleman, with gold spectacles and 'business' writ in every wrinkle of his forehead.

"'This house to let, ma'am?' says he.

"'Yes, sir,' says I.

"'Can I look at it?' says he.

"'Certainly, sir,' says I.

"I began as smooth as oil about the hot and cold water, the marble-floored bath-room and the tiles, when all of a sudden he puts up two hands in a warning sort of a way.

"'That'll do, ma'am,' says he, 'that'll do. I've eyes, and can see for myself.'

"'Certainly, sir,' says I; but I don't deny as I was took aback by that queer, dictatorial way of his.

"'Any ghosts about the place, ma'am?' asked he.

"'Sir?' says I.

"'Ghosts,' says he, out loud and sharp. 'Mysterious footsteps—lurking shadows—clanking chains at midnight?'

"'Mercy, no, sir,' says I, beginning to feel my flesh creep all over.

"'Rats?' says he.

"'Certainly not,' says I; 'with solid cemented cellar floor, and patent wood blocks.'

"'Beetles?' says he.

"'Look for yourself, sir,' says I, bridling up a little.

"'I like the house,' says he, after he had gone sniffing about the drain pipes, and peered into the coal cellar and wine vault, and sounded the copper boiler with his knuckles, just for all the world as if he was in the plumbing business. 'You may tell the agent I'll take it, if he and I can come to terms about the rent. When shall you see him?'

"'Most likely this afternoon, sir,' says I.

"'I'll drop in at his office to-morrow at nine,' says he. 'I'm going to be married,' says he, as composed as if he were saying that he was going to take a blue pill. 'The house will suit my wife's ideas. She thinks we are going to board,' says he, with an odd sort of a chuckle in his throat, 'and she's not a bit pleased with the idea. It'll be a pleasant surprise for her,' says he.

"Well, no sooner had he gone than in comes a stout, middle-aged lady in a black dress, rows of curls on either side of her face, and cheeks as red as any cabbage roses.

"'I've just come from Mr. Eagle's office,' says she; 'he has given me the refusal of this house, in case it suits me.'

"'I don't know, ma'am,' says I, 'but what it's let already.'

"'Let already!' says she, with a sort of scream. 'But that's impossible! Have not I told you that I've the refusal of it? Show me the premises at once.'

"Well, I was in a pretty puzzle, as you may believe; but I went all over the house with the curly lady, and she declared that it met her fancy exactly.

"'Possession on the 1st of May, I suppose?' says she.

"'Yes, ma'am,' says I, 'if——.'

"'There's no "if" in the question,' says she, as short as pie-crust. 'You may take down the "To Let," my good woman.'

"I curtseys very low, but I says to myself, 'not if I know it, ma'am, without orders from the agent himself.'

"Away went the lady with the curly hair and rose-red cheeks, and I was just putting on my hat to run round to the House Agency, when in comes Mr. Eagle himself, all smiles.

"'Well, Mrs. Pounce,' says he, 'so the house is let.'

"'To my thinking, sir,' says I, 'it's let twice over.'

"Then I up and told him about my old gentleman.

"'Dear me,' says he, 'this is very perplexing. At what time was this personage here?'

"'The clock struck twelve, sir,' says I, 'just as he went away.'

"Mr. Eagle hit himself a blow over the forehead like a play-actor.

"'Confusion worse confounded!' says he. 'It was twelve precisely when my customer left the office. We can't split the house in two, can we? Well, we must tell your old gentleman just how it happened. I dare say he will be reasonable about it.'

"But he wasn't reasonable, Mr. Eagle told me afterward; he never saw any one in such a rage.

"'I've taken the house,' says he, 'and I'll have it, cost what it may. Do you say that the rent is two hundred pounds? I'll give you two hundred and fifty down; if my claim and that of this lady are equally good, the question of price must settle it.'

"Well, we supposed, me and Mr. Eagle, as that was the end of the matter. But not a bit of it. The lady came that same afternoon with an upholster and a tape measure to see about the carpets. 'Two hundred and fifty pounds indeed!' says she, with a toss of her curls. 'It will take more than a paltry two hundred and fifty pounds to unsettle my plans. I'll give three hundred sooner than I'll lose the house.'

"When my old gentleman hears this, he grinds his teeth in a manner as was frightful to hear.

"'It's my house,' says he, 'and I will have it! Three hundred and fifty pounds, Eagle!'

"'Come,' says Mr. Eagle, 'matters are getting lively. The house agent business is looking up.'

"But you should have heard what a whistle he gave when I told him, the very next day that the curly lady had authorised me to offer four hundred.

"'I'll not stand this any longer,' said Mr. Eagle, jumping up and sending the papers flying all over the office table. 'I've a conscience, if fate has made a house agent of me. Tell her to come round this afternoon and sign the lease. Four hundred pounds is twice what we asked, and we asked twice what the property was worth to begin with.'

"So the curly-headed lady had her own way, after all. The bald-headed old gentleman stamped about in a pretty rage when he heard as the house was let.

"'I'll sue the Agency,' says he; 'I'll have the house if it costs me all I'm worth.'

"'Oh, hush, sir,' says I, all in a tremble. 'Here comes Miss Wix now.'

"'Who?' says he.

"'Miss Wix,' says I. 'The lady who has taken the house.'

"I got behind the door, fully expecting a scene, after what had come and gone. But, to my surprise, she gave a little shriek and flew into his arms.

"'Dear Josiah!' says she.

"'Dear Barbara!' says he.

"'I was looking for a desirable residence for you, my own angel,' says he.

"'You duck!' says she.

"'And thought this would exactly suit you,' says he.

"'Oh,' said she, 'it does, and I've taken it at four hundred pounds a year. It seems a good deal of money to pay, but I've been driven to it by a horrid old cormorant who was determined to have the house at any price. However——'

"'Barbara,' says the old gentleman, with a little gasping sound in his throat, as if he was swallowing a lump, 'that horrid old cormorant was I!'

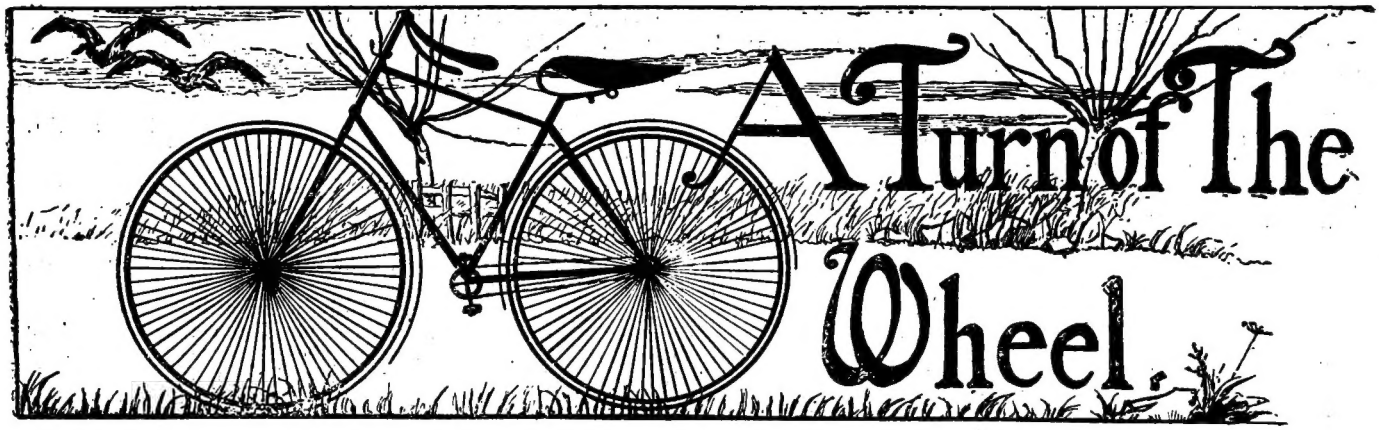
"'You don't mean——' says she.

"'That we have been bidding against each other,' says the old gentleman. 'Yes, we have.'

"'And I was going to give you a pleasant surprise,' says she, pulling out her handkerchief.

"'It is a surprise,' says he. 'But as for the pleasure of it——. Never mind, Barbara. Let's go in and measure for the carpets and curtains.'"

Digitized by Google



A Turn of The Wheel.

A FEW years ago a bicycle rider was no common thing in Provence. Brian Blair was perhaps the first who came wheeling by the golden fields and vineyards like a mounted Mercury.

"Qu' c'est qu' ca?" the peasants asked each other, staring after the glittering wonder. One look at the strange chariot, and one longer at the handsome, clean-shaven youth whose shapely legs propelled the wheels so deftly and swiftly. He was pleasant to look upon, for his eyes were brown and merry, his smiles came quickly, and he knew enough French to toss a gay salutation here and there.

"Pardieu!" he cried, impatiently pushing back a broad-brimmed peasant's hat, for he had exchanged his own blue polo by the way. "When one is in France one must exclaim in French. I suppose I must ask these Provencals what they say when it gets so confoundedly hot. Heavens, how hungry I am getting! I could eat black bread and cheese even. What a treat it would be to sit down under those hop-vines, and—by Jove, what a pretty girl!"

In the arched doorway of a little stone cottage, a young girl stood—a figure off an old Watteau fan—young, fair, smiling. It was Fanchon Thibault, who had the unconscious trick of posing like a basque statuette in her flowered chintz skirt and fresh muslin draperies, with a white kerchief tucked round her pretty neck; some frills of Swiss needlework half hiding her round arms, and a most becoming cap coquettishly perched above her braids of soft brown hair.

Of course Brian stared, and that was his undoing, for bump went his machine against a large stone; and just when he might have wished most to make an impression he took a terrible header into the road, and a cloud of dust enveloped his prostrate form.

Brian remembered afterwards the vision of a fair and lovely face bending over him and a little hand wiping something wet out of his eyes. Could it have been blood! He did not know, nor did he trouble to think, and in a moment it had all gone from him like a dream.

The first thing that came back to his memory was a cool little room with white walls, against which an ebony crucifix hung in bold relief. Brian turned his head, and a soft step glided to his bedside.

"What has happened to me?" he asked, raising himself on his elbow with a painful sense of weakness.

"You have been ill—very ill," was the gentle reply, in clear and beautiful French. "Lie down, please. The doctor says you are not to raise your head for several days." Brian turned inquiringly, and saw his Watteau shepherdess.

"Oh, I remember," he said, sinking back on the pillow with a prolonged sigh. "It was you who upset me."

"I, monsieur!" she cried, in startled tones.

"I was looking at you," Brian replied. "You were standing in the doorway, and I was thinking how pretty you were, when my wheel caught, and over I went. So you see, it was your fault, mademoiselle."

"Yes, but—" she began, blushing prettily.

"Fanchon!" called a low even voice from the next room. "Nanon wants you down-stairs, my child."

"Yes, uncle," she said quickly, and Brian suddenly found her place by his side taken by an old man in priestly robes, who looked at him with stern disapproval.

"You are not to talk," said the newcomer curtly. "You are very ill. Besides, you must not say such things to my niece. She is going to join the Sisterhood of the Blessed Virgin, and I cannot have you putting wrong notions into her head. A sick man should be better employed."

Brian had nothing to say. He was weak, and the stern hard face of the priest awed him. "What a pity!" he thought, with a sudden fierce rebellious feeling he could not understand. "Such a pretty girl—such a wonderfully pretty girl to be shut up in a convent!"

"You are an Englishman, I believe?" the priest said suddenly.

"Yes; I am from London," Brian replied, and wondered at the peculiar look that swept over the priest's thin, worn face. "Do you think I'd better send any word to my people?"

There was no reply, and when he turned his head Père Thibault had gone.

There were some dull days after that—days when he looked in vain for a glimpse of Fanchon, when his heart beat strangely as he heard her singing below in the garden. Père Thibault and an old household witch they called Nanon came in and out and sat with him between the doctor's visits, till Brian had a wicked desire to throw his boots at the old priest's head, and take a shy at Nanon's black silk cap, which was invariably crooked.

"This is beastly," he said, tossing himself impatiently on his rumpled pillow. "I wonder how much longer I am to be kept here."

A knock at the door interrupted this amiable soliloquy. "There comes that Macbethian witch with my dinner," he reflected. "Come in." The door opened, but it was Fanchon who carried the tray.

"Oh," cried Brian eagerly, his face quite radiant, "I am so glad to see you! Do sit down and talk to me. I am dying of *ennui*. Nanon is so stupid, and your uncle is so pious, that they drive me frantic between them."

Fanchon smiled sedately as she set the little tray down.

"I hope you are feeling better, monsiéur," she said.

"Since you came——. Yes," he replied. "No, no. Don't go——, please, don't. Sit down here. Where did you get those violets you are wearing? Just give me a smell of them. Oh, you don't know how I lie here and long for the green fields and the birds and the flowers! You love flowers, don't you?"

Fanchon took the bunch of violets from her breast, and held them out to him.

"Don't tell Père Thibault that I gave them to you," she said, with a provoking little *moue*. "He wouldn't allow it."

Brian seized the flowers, and pressed them to his lips.

"You are very good," he said, as gratefully as though she had saved his life.

"Very bad, I'm afraid," she said, sighing. "When my uncle comes home he will be very cross at Nanon for letting me bring you your dinner."

Digitized by Google

"Where has he gone?"

"He has gone to Mère Brissac. She is dying, poor soul! God save her!" And Fanchon crossed herself devoutly.

"And what is Nanon doing?"

"Poor Nanon! She has the toothache. Oh, it is frightful!"

"I did not know she had any teeth left to ache," Brian observed. "Well, that's a blessing in disguise—that toothache. No, you must sit down. I won't eat a mouthful if you don't."

"Oh, you are bad!" said Fanchon, yielding with a little laugh, and they were soon chatting gaily there together. Brian heard all about the chickens and the pigeons, the bees and the rabbits, the flower garden and the vineyards, and all the time he was falling more deeply and hopelessly in love with this charming Provencal.

"Is it really true, mademoiselle," he asked, at last, "that you are destined for the Church?"

A cloud drifted over the bright, lovely face, and Fanchon's eyes fell.

"My uncle says so, monsieur," she replied.

"But you don't want to be a nun?" Brian urged eagerly, almost trembling with suppressed emotion.

"It is not what we wish that is best for us. My uncle says the world is very wicked, and that I shall be far happier if ——"

"Bosh!" cried Brian savagely. "I beg your pardon, mademoiselle; but you are too young and too fair to bury yourself in a convent. The world must go on, and why may you not share the lot of other women? You were born to make some man happy with your love. There is no lot in the world that would suit you so well as that of a happy wife and mother."

"You must not say such things to me, monsieur," she cried, in agitated tones. "You must not; it is very wrong."

"But I will say so," said Brian, seizing the little hand that rested on the bed beside him. "If you will let me, I will say more. I have seen you only a few times; but I know I could love you. Nay, Fanchon, I do love you! Hear me. I am rich. Let me make you my wife, and give up —— "

"Never!" burst forth a stern voice that made Fanchon spring up in terror, and the next moment the irate form of Père Thibault was standing between them. "Shame upon you, Fanchon!" he passionately cried, his blazing eyes fixed upon the girl's trembling form. "You—the bride of the Church! You listen to words of love from a man you have not known a fortnight, and he was one of that accursed race that murdered your father! And you," he went on, holding out one thin hand that trembled with rage as he turned upon Brian, "you repay me thus for taking you into my house, and nursing you back from the doors of death. Begone, disobedient girl! Get down on your knees and pray for forgiveness. Silence! Not a single word! Go!"

Poor Fanchon stole away, trembling with fear, and perhaps Père Thibault expected Brian to fall on his knees then and there, praying for mercy; but he did not. Fanchon had no sooner left the room than he sprang out of bed and confronted the angry priest.

"Hear me, Père Thibault," he said, in a voice that was strong and clear with excitement; "it is my turn to speak; I love your niece, and wish to marry her."

"That you never shall," cried the priest vehemently. "She shall marry no man, and you least of all. Was it not the cursed war in the Crimea in which the English stirred on the French to fight that robbed me of my brother Ambrose, my only brother, whom I nursed in these arms as a mother nurses her babe?

"Yes. You killed him there amongst you, and now you wish to take from me his only child! But you shall not. I swore once that no Englishman should ever cross my threshold; but the devil sent you. You found a shelter in my house only to abuse the kindness that aided you. Out with you, I say! Begone at once, monster ingrate!"

Brian shrugged his shoulders. He went downstairs, groping his way, surprised at his own feebleness. Fanchon was standing in the shaded doorway, and he saw that she had been weeping.

"Oh," she cried in alarm, "you are not able to go about!"

"Oh, yes," he said lightly, "I am quite well; but thou," he added, dropping into the tender second person, "thou art unhappy, little one. I have gotten thee into a sad scrape, I am afraid."

She did not reply, for her tears suddenly welled up again, and she could not speak. Brian was like other men, and the sight of a woman weeping—especially this one—was quite too much for him. He put his arms round her, and drew her head down on his shoulder.

"Dost thou love me, little darling?" he whispered. "My heart is thine, Fanchon. No one can take it from thee if thou carest to keep it."

"No, no!" she cried hurriedly, withdrawing herself from his embrace. "Hush! I must not listen to thee. Thou must go away. I will never forget thee—never—never; but——" She burst into tears, and then, flinging herself upon his breast, she sobbed, "God forgive me, but I do love thee!"

Brian's arms clasped the little form to his heart. "Come with me, Fanchon," he cried joyously. "Be my wife. I have a home where thou shalt be welcome."

"No, no!" she said, again withdrawing from his embrace. "My uncle is old and lonely. He loved my father as he loved his own soul. My father was killed in your war, and my uncle can never forgive you."

"But what had I to do with that?" exclaimed Brian impatiently.

"You are an Englishman. My uncle will never, never forgive you. You must go away and forget me."

"I'll be hanged if I will!" said Brian, in vigorous English.

"What sayest thou?" Fanchon asked gently.

"I said I wouldn't."

"But I can never marry thee. First of all, I am wedded to the Church, and then I will never disobey my uncle. Provencals who disobey live accursed. Thou must go, and thou must never return."

This one idea she repeated again and again, till Brian slowly realised that he could not persuade her; yet he lingered on the cottage steps. The sun was setting, and a mellow light fell on the grass near them, which was studded with white star-eyed flowers.

On the ground lay Brian's jacket, which he had tossed there indifferently as he stood and talked to Fanchon.

"Do not make me any more unhappy than I am," she said, at length. "You are not able to go far, I know, but the inn is just below, and there you can stay till you are stronger."

"You seem deter-

In the arched doorway of a little stone cottage a young girl stood.

Digitized by Google

mined to get rid of me," Brian said jealously. "I am going—since you wish it. I dare say you will soon forget me."

"Dost thou think so unkindly of me?" she said in gentle reproof. "Did I not say I would never forget thee?"

"Didst thou mean it?" he asked, looking up into her eyes. "If thou wilt promise me that, there may be some hope yet."

"I promise you," she said softly.

"You will not marry anyone else, Fanchon?"

"No—never."

He took her hand in his, and, bending over her, kissed her. Then, with a resolute step, he turned and went away. Poor Fanchon's heart was at her lips as she saw him mount his bicycle and wheel away.

"If he should fall again," and then she resumed her womanly occupation of crying.

A week passed by. Père Thibault had said nothing further to Fanchon about her conduct toward the detested Englishman, but Sister Agnes came back and forth at the cottage, and Fanchon knew that she was being disposed of, and hat made her cry the more.

"Dry thy tears, child," said Sister Agnes. "Thy sorrows will be soon at an end. In the holy Church there is no grief. To-morrow I will take thee to a haven of rest."

"But I don't want to be a nun!" Fanchon burst forth. "I don't want to leave this world and shut myself up in a convent. I hate it! I detest the dark corridors and the gloomy cells—and everything! I love the fields and the birds and the flowers. I don't want to leave them."

At this outbreak of passion Sister Agnes's face became grave. "Unhappy child!" she said sternly. "Thy heart is full of a less holy joy than the love of nature's beauties. Pray to God for purity. Seek not the idols of this world."

"I do not ask for much," said Fanchon, in a low, broken voice. "I ask only for what God meant every woman to have You cannot crush such thoughts out of my heart, and if I may not be his wife I shall die!"

As she spoke her voice trembled, and she entreatingly stretched out her arms. The nun opened her lips to utter a pious rebuke, but they closed again in silence, for someone came down the garden-walk to the little summer-house, and the hop-vines parted before a strong, manly hand.

"Fanchon, my darling," said Brian Blair. "I have come back to thee!"

The nun turned away, for in a moment they were in each other's arms, and Père Thibault was coming rapidly towards them with a strange gentleman by his side — strange, yet oddly like the tall old priest, on whose face shone a look that Sister Agnes had never seen there before.

"Fanchon!" he said, in a clear, ringing voice, "embrace thy lover and God bless you both. He has brought back thy father and my brother Ambrose. He was not killed in the war, but taken prisoner, and kept for a long time in Russia. See, he is there!"

"Dry thy tears, child," said Sister Agnes.

"I found thy father in Paris."

The bewildered girl turned from Brian to embrace her father.

"Tell me," she whispered; "I do not understand."

"I found thy father in Paris," said Brian, holding her hand tightly in his own. "It was the merest chance. He had a shop there, and the name was the same as yours. I asked questions, and learned that he had been in the Crimean War, was taken prisoner, and shot in the head by a sentinel while attempting to escape. This bullet affected his reason. For ten years his mind was gone. Then a great surgeon extracted the ball, and his reason was restored. He returned home, but his brother was gone from his old home, his wife was dead, and he could find no trace of any of his family. After searching for years, he gave up all hope, and settled down in Paris, where I found him."

"God bless you for it," said Fanchon softly, and she kissed her new-found father with tenderest joy. The old priest wiped his moist eyes on his cassock sleeve.

"Sister Agnes," he said, in an altered tone, "I am afraid you have lost your young proselyte. Fanchon's father is willing she should marry, and—I have nothing to say against it now."

The Sister stooped and kissed Fanchon's forehead. "I hope you will be happy," she whispered, and then left them to their joy.

"Do you think you can be happy?" said Brian, looking down into her eyes.

"I am," Fanchon replied, nestling against his side.

A few days afterwards, at the close of the matin service, Père Thibault married them, and Brian brought away his bride with many blessings.

Digitized by Google

"NIG."

"DON'T be afraid, sir; you will not miss the train. I've taken travellers to the train for five years, and I have never made them miss the train. Do you hear, sir? Never."

"However——."

"Oh, don't look at your watch. There is one thing that you don't know which you ought to know, but which your watch will not tell you. That is, that the train is always fifteen minutes late. I never knew it to be in time."

But it was one of those rare days when the train was exactly in time, and I was left.

I now had to wait three long hours in a lonely village in one of the cantons of Switzerland. It was hemmed in by two dismal-looking mountains, the tops of which were covered with snow.

How was I to pass these three hours? I invoked the help of the bystanders. There was another general response: "Go and see the whirlpool. There is nothing to equal it in the country." And where was the whirlpool? "Upon the mountain to the right, about half-way up; but the road is very bad." They advised me to take a guide, and there below, in that little white cottage with the green blinds, I could find the best guide in the country, an honest man, Father Simon.

I went and knocked on the door of the cottage. An old woman came and opened it.

"Father Simon?"

"It is his house—but is it to go to the whirlpool?"

"Yes; it is to go there."

"Ah, well! Father Simon has already been there this morning. He is tired, and does not wish to go again. But don't be alarmed. There is someone to take his place. There is Nig."

"Send for Nig."

"But you must know beforehand Nig is not a person."

"Not a person?"

"No, it is our dog. He will show you very well—as well as my man. He is used to it."

"How used to it?"

"You see that for years and years Father Simon has taken Nig with him, so he has learned all the roads, and now he can make the trips alone. He has often taken travellers, and we have always been complimented by them. As for his intelligence, have no fear. He has as much as you or I."

"But is it not necessary to speak?"

"If it were to show you the monuments, yes, for then it would be necessary to give you the history and the dates; but this time there is nothing to see but the beauties of Nature. Take Nig. Besides, it will be cheaper. It is three francs for my man; with Nig it is but thirty sous; and Nig will show you as much for thirty sous as my man will for three francs."

"Very well; where is Nig?"

"He is asleep by the fire. He has already taken some people this morning to the whirlpool. Shall I call him?"

"Yes, call him."

"Nig! Nig!"

He came with a bound through the window. He was a homely enough little black animal. His long hair was curly and twisted into knots. He did not look like very much on the outside, but he carried himself with a certain air of gravity, of decision, and of importance. He immediately looked me over closely, precisely; casting his eyes from my head to my feet with an air that said very plainly: "It is a traveller, and he wishes to go to the whirlpool."

To lose one train was enough for one day, and I did not care to expose myself to that misfortune a second time, so I explained to this honest woman that I had but three hours to make the trip.

"Oh, I know that perfectly well. You can take the train at four o'clock. Do not fear; Nig will bring you back in time. Go, Nig! Start, my boy; all ready!"

But Nig did not appear to be at all disposed to start. He remained immovable, watching his mistress with apparent anxiety.

"Ah! I am so foolish!" said the old woman. "I had forgotten the sugar." She went and brought four pieces of sugar from the closet and gave them to me.

"See! this is why he would not start. You have now got the pieces of sugar. See! Nig, the gentleman has the sugar. Now. Go! my boy. To the whirlpool! To the whirlpool! To the whirlpool!" She repeated these words, speaking very slowly and distinctly.

Nig answered the words of his mistress with little nods of his head, which quickened at the last with a show of impatience, as if to say, "Yes, yes; I know. The gentleman has some pieces of sugar, and we go to the whirlpool. I understand. Do you take me for a numskull?" And without waiting to hear the third "To the whirlpool" of Madame Simon, Nig turned round on his paws, came and raised his face to mine with a look as if showing me the way, and said, as plainly as it is permitted to a dog to speak to man:

"Let us go. Come, you!"

I followed him obediently. We went down the road, he ahead and I behind. We were obliged to cross the entire village. Some children who were playing in the road recognised my guide.

"Here, Nig! Good-day, Nig!"

They wished to play with the dog, but he turned away his head with an air of a dog who had no time to amuse himself—of a dog who had to make his living and was earning thirty sous. One of the children said to the other:

"Let him be. He is taking that gentleman to the whirlpool. Good-day, Mister!"

The rest all laughed, and repeated after him:

"Good-day, Mister!"

I smiled reluctantly. I felt embarrassed—even a little humiliated. He was, for the time being, my master. He knew where we went, and I did not. I was anxious to get out of the village, to find myself alone with him, and face to face with the beauties of Nature.

The beauties of Nature, so far, were a frightful road, dusty and burning under a leaden sun. The dog travelled on with a quick step that tired me to keep up with him. I tried to moderate his ardour. "Nig, my boy, not so fast!" Nig dropped his ears, evidently not wishing to hear his fellow-traveller, and when I attempted to seat myself by the side of a tree, he exhibited signs of impatience. He barked in a little, sharp voice, and looked at me in a very ferocious way.

Evidently it was not the proper thing to stop there. Nig pawed the ground so sharply and vigorously that I arose to follow him. He instantly became quiet, and began to trot gaily ahead of me. I understood him, and he was contented.

Some minutes afterward we came to a beautiful pathway, flowery, shady, full of the perfume of roses and filled with the murmur of the springs. Nig had already entered the wood, and had disappeared at a gallop. I followed him, a little out of breath.

I had not gone a dozen paces when I found Nig, who waited for me, head in the air, and eyes sparkling. Where he stopped was a grassy arbour, made musical by the song of a rippling brook. There I saw an old bench, and the eyes of Nig turned impatiently from me to the bench. I had begun to understand the language of dogs:

"Now," said he to me, "behold a place to rest. It is pleasant here, and cool. You were foolish to wish to rest in the open wood. Now sit down. I will permit you to do so for a short while."

I stopped and seated myself. I lighted a cigar. I made a motion to offer one to Nig. Perhaps he smoked, but I thought that he would prefer a morsel of sugar. He caught it very adroitly, and cracked it with his great white teeth. Then he lay down and slept at my feet. He was evidently in the habit of taking a nap in this lovely spot.

He slept about ten minutes. I had by this time become accustomed to the whole thing. Nig had inspired me with perfect confidence. I was resolved to obey him blindly. He arose, casting his eyes from side to side, which meant, "Let

Digitized by Google

us start, my friend"; and now behold us, like two comrades, travelling slowly along under the trees. The dog enjoyed the charm, the silence, and the beauty of the surroundings.

Before this, while we had been exposed to the fierce sun, he had travelled with quick, short steps, to escape the dust and the heat; but now, refreshed and rested, he walked for the pleasure of walking under the green shade of the trees.

A road now appeared toward the left; a short hesitation on the part of Nig. He reflected. Then he passed on and continued his route straight before him, but not without a certain lack of confidence in his manner, and now I see him stop. Ah! he was almost cheated that time. He is coming back, and now we take the new road to the left. At the end of a dozen paces he brings me into a sort of circle, and then, with his nose in the air, invites me to contemplate a very respectable wall of rough rocks, forming a rude amphitheatre.

When Nig thought I had inspected this place enough he turned about, and we went back again to the other road. Nig had evidently forgotten to show me the Circle of Rocks—a light enough fault in a dog, but which he had quickly rectified.

The route now became very steep, very dangerous, and difficult. I advanced more slowly and with infinite precautions. The dog sprang lightly from rock to rock, but he did not abandon me. He waited for me, watching my steps carefully with the most touching solicitude. At last I began to hear a boiling and roaring noise. Nig made a great demonstration. "Courage!" said he. "Courage! We have arrived. Now you will see the whirlpool."

It was indeed a whirlpool. The stream was modest enough, and the falls equally modest, but the water leaped from rock to rock, crossing and recrossing, and fell sparkling into a great basin of rock, around the edge of which the water fumed and whirled.

I should certainly never have been really consoled for my laborious tramp by seeing such an ordinary scene if it had not been for my companion, the brave Nig, who was to me much more interesting and remarkable than the whirlpool. On each side of this stream was a little Swiss *châlet*, or dairy, attended each by a little Swiss maiden, one a brunette, the other a blonde.

Each was dressed in the national costume, and was awaiting anxiously my arrival. It seemed to me that the blonde had the prettier eyes, and I had taken three or four steps in that direction when Nig, barking loudly and furiously, absolutely prevented my advance in that direction. Had he a preference for the little brunette? I changed my direction, and all went well.

The dog, appeased as if by enchantment, went ahead to a seat at the table in front of the *châlet* of his young friend. I asked for a glass of milk. The girl went into the house, and Nig followed behind. By a half-opened window I soon saw the bright, shining eyes of my dog. The little wretch! He was being served before me! It is he who is always first. I could see him there now with his great basin of milk.

After a while he appeared, with great white globules of milk dripping from his moustache, and condescended to wait for me while I drank my fill. I gave him a piece of sugar, and we both appeared to be well satisfied with ourselves and with each other.

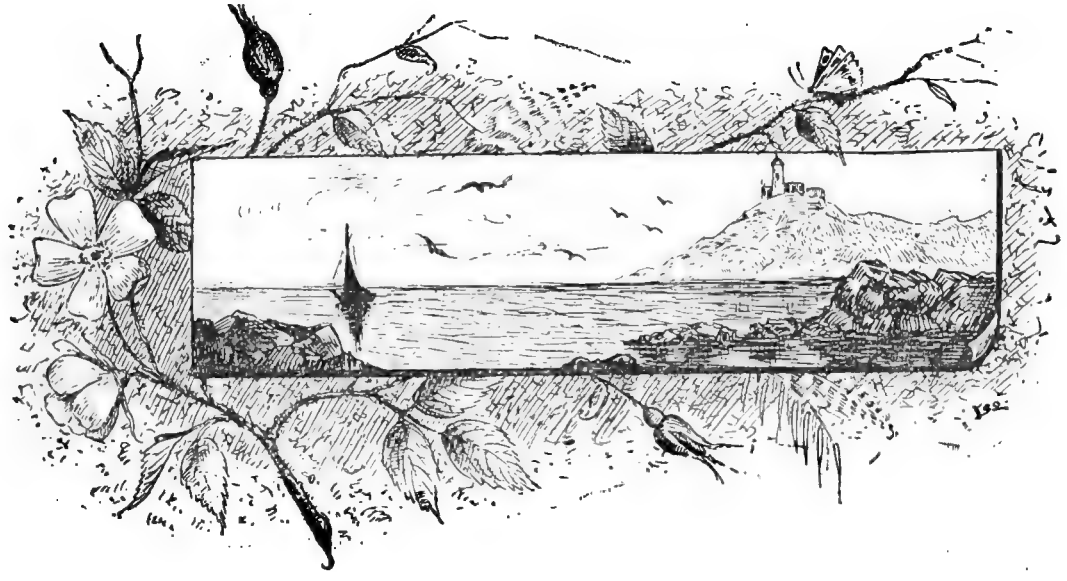
Nig began to show signs of anxiety. I read now in his eyes as in a book. He wished to start. I paid my bill and rose; then I started for the road which had brought us up the mountain. I saw Nig had gone and planted himself squarely at the entrance to another road. He cast upon me a serious look, even severe; but I had made such progress during the two hours that the eloquent silence of the animal had become familiar to me.

"What sort of opinion must you have of me?" said Nig. "Do you think I will travel twice over the same road? No, no; I am too good a guide for that. I know my business. We will return by another route."

We descended by this other road, which was still prettier than the first. Nig was very lively now, and often turned toward me with a little triumphant air. We recrossed the village to the platform of the station, and were met by three or four other dogs, who wanted to gossip with my comrade, but Nig growled, and refused their advances.

"You see well enough what I have got to do. I must conduct the gentleman to the train." It was only when I was in the waiting-room that he would consent to leave me, after having cracked gaily the last two pieces of sugar; and this is how I translated his parting glance:

"Now we are five minutes ahead of time. It is not I who would let you miss the train. I wish you good-day, sir; good-day."



Digitized by Google

THE MAN MY SISTER MARRIED.

CHAPTER XVII.

"You never saw me show fear yet, Bruce," said John quietly. He pushed the old man aside, stepped out, then turned and came back into the room, a queer, dazed look on his face. I followed his eyes, and there, on the threshold of the door, was a woman.

She was clothed in a tawdry shawl, a dirty, draggled gown, and over her battered hat she wore a thick veil. She was tall and straight, with a proud bearing, despite her poverty-stricken apparel.

With a quick gesture, she flung off her veil, disclosing a pallid haggard face, wrinkled and shrunken, shadowed by that dreadful destroyer, consumption.

But the eyes; those great dark eyes! I knew her then! She was my sister Katherine. An icy hand clutched my heart, and with a wild grasping at the empty air, I sank into a low chair behind the *portière*. The room went whirling round, and for a moment I heard a crashing like the sea, and yet I knew there was a dreadful silence in the room.

Then she herself spoke, and I seemed to come back from far away, and to be forced to listen. Her voice was hoarse and low. Words came with difficulty, as if to speak gave her pain, and there was a querulous tone in all she said, such as a sick person uses.

"I seem to have interrupted a family gathering. Grandfather and Aunt Marg here! You were not so friendly twenty years ago. John, as young looking as ever, so little changed, and me—what a wreck I am, and poor; why, I've almost starved! Then someone sent me money, someone of my past, perhaps Dean, it does not matter, and I dragged myself home. I've come like Lazarus, to feed from the crumbs of the rich man's table. You might want a cup of cold water in the next world, John. There is murder enough on your conscience, as there is on mine, for that matter. I know I don't deserve anything, but you can't let me die of hunger."

Still no sound from those waiting people. How ghastly still the room was! No one dared to speak. For the first time in his brave life, John's courage failed him. He sank into a chair, covering his face with his hands. It all seemed like a terrible nightmare to me. I tried to rise. I would go to him and comfort his misery, and then it flashed over me what Katherine's presence meant to me.

She flung off her veil.

"I haven't got long to live," she went on recklessly. "Consumption's got a hold on me; been dying by inches. Even after the past, John, you haven't the heart to drive me out to die like a dog."

Then Mrs. Scott spoke: "It is impossible for you to stay here in this house," she said icily; "even in Galveston, where people think you dead."

"If it's Dean you are thinking of," Katherine cried eagerly, "you need not fear. I have not seen him for years. Don't know where he is; maybe he sent me the money to come here; some spite work; but the few months left me, Mrs. Scott, I'll be so good, you needn't dread me."

"I have suffered enough through you," said Mrs. Scott bitterly; "you wrecked my son's life, sent him a wanderer from his home for years; made him an outlaw; on your head is all the guilt of that awful past. I would not breathe the same air you do, nor have you one hour under my roof."

"She must see she cannot stay in this house," said Aunt Marg, "there are plenty of places outside. When she understands pleading is hopeless, she will have sense enough to go away quietly."

"Not until he says so," cried Katherine; "not for you, Margaret Collier, with your soft, purring ways. What are you but the accomplice of assassins, the only witness? You cannot judge me now. Oh, for a shelter and kindness! I deserve none, I know that; but I will not cumber the ground long. I am a living dead woman. If there was any pity, but there is none; a good woman like you, Mrs. Scott, and a narrow one like Margaret Collier, will never forgive. You keep us down. You drive us to the gutter—to suicide!"

"You deserve no pity, for you had none that day. I saw you then," said Margaret fiercely. "I saw my sister dragged away, and you uttered no petition for her; you left her baby to lie there to die. You saw your own father shot without a tear. You are not a woman, but a monster, a moral leper, and if you died at the door you should be thrust out of the house. Is it right, is it just, that you live to bring sorrow and dishonour, when those good women died?"

"Be silent, Margaret," said John steadily. He rose to his feet, and for a moment struggled with himself, as though fierce, burning words came which he would check. How noble he looked then, and I was glad. I had not thought he would be unmanly, even to her; I felt that he would be gentle. He had that chivalrous courtesy for the suffering and weak that all gentlemen have. I realised the meaning of that word then.

"I—I can hardly trust myself to speak," John faltered, passing his hand over his eyes; "it is so hard; oh, my God, it is so hard! But you are suffering, ill, in want. I have plenty—you shall be cared for." He had never looked at her once. She moved a step nearer him.

"You will not drive me out, John."

He shuddered and stepped back. "You must go away, otherwise I shall invoke the law for my mother's sake, for my——" Then he stopped, and turned so ghastly pale I thought he would fall. He staggered back to his chair with a bitter groan—he had almost said, "my wife." To him, too, that awful sentence had come. What were we to each other now?

"I wonder you do not use your strength," she hissed; "but, John, you used to be so kind, so generous, I thought you might forgive when you saw the wreck I am. In that past I never dreamed the consequences of that awful day. I could not check them; as well stop the fierce flight of a herd of stampeded cattle as reason with those drunken Mexican brutes. I was so young then. It happened so quickly. They said you cared for me all the long years that my portrait hung in your room. It is there, still, I know it." She ran across to the library.

"What can we do?" cried Mrs Scott, wringing her hands.

"Send for the police," said Aunt Marg; and I realised how cruel a good woman can be.

Katherine came feebly back, catching at the door for support.

"You love some other woman, John. My picture is taken away; only a wreck there, like me; yet Dean told me you had been true to my memory all these years. I used to boast of it. I wish I hadn't come back; had died long ago," she went on, tremulously, all her bravado gone. "I was wicked, I am punished—ill, suffering, and broken. I haven't a place to lay my head."

"Katherine," said my grandfather, going toward her—and what a pathetically brave little figure he was—"I never liked you, nor believed you, and you hadn't no goodwill to me in your proud days; but, now you are come to want, are sick and homeless, I'll take you to that poor little house you used to despise. Come home with me." He went to her and drew her arm through his. "I am very sorry, John, that any of my blood should be like her; your misery is not greater than mine. None of your money must do for her. I have enough and plenty, and from this moment she shall never cross your path."

Digitized by Google

When they were gone, Aunt Marg, a set, angry look upon her face, turned to Mrs. Scott. "I cannot go home now," she said, "where that woman is."

"Then stay with me," answered Mrs. Scott; "and Letty—oh, my poor child, my Letty!"

I pushed by them and went to John; kneeling by his side, I put his arm about my neck. How dreadful he looked, with that white face, those staring wide eyes that did not seem his at all, a deep wrinkle between his brows I never saw there before.

"You will believe I knew," he gasped; "but they said she was dead. I saw a grave. It was his vile work. If I had married, thinking that woman, Katherine, was dead and there were children, he could upset any will of mine. It was a deep-laid plot, but he could not wait for his vengeance, and you made me spare him. Letty, if you think that I deceived you, that—I—I knew her to be alive, I shall go mad."

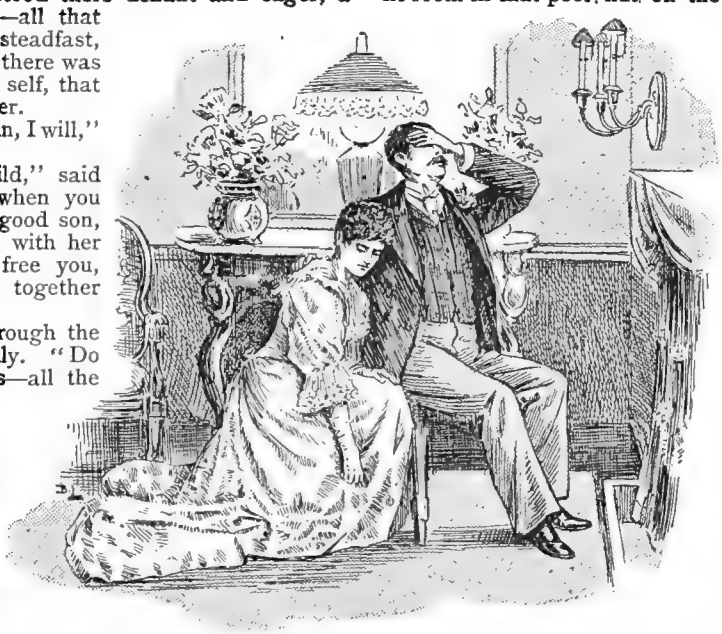
"I do not—and, John," I cried miserably, "what am I now? You said, 'if I had married.' Am I not your wife? I cannot reason any more."

"You are my wife," he said, clasping me in his arms; "they shall not part us. I will take you to Mexico. My yacht is ready. We can sail to-night. We will!" He lifted me to my feet and stood there defiant and eager, a reckless look on his face—all that will of his, so strong and steadfast, fixed on our departure. But there was one to win him to his better self, that quiet little woman, his mother.

"If you say it is right, John, I will," I whispered.

"It is not right, my child," said Mrs. Scott. "Oh, John, when you were so brave and true, my good son, would you begin your life with her with a sin? Let the law free you, and then you can come together again."

"And drag that story through the courts," he answered roughly. "Do you know what that means—all the past coming to light, and from the lips of such a woman as that? Those men, wronged by her, are living yet, and she will accuse them of murder. I have no right to give her that chance. Did I not wrong those men enough? In her anger she would stop at nothing, at no accusation. Such are the weapons of her kind. Where might the story end? Her very presence would set a thousand tongues talking; a dead woman come to life—and such a one! I will not reason with you nor anyone. Margaret you shall not speak. I will have my say, and Letty is willing. Our lives are in our own hands."



"I shall go mad."

"And other lives," sobbed Mrs. Scott. "Oh, John, I have lived too long!"

"Come with me, Letty," pleaded Aunt Margaret, clasping my hand. "If only for to-night, until we can think what is to be done."

"Come where?" I asked rebelliously; "I must not stay in John's house. I am not his wife, and you will not go home."

"There are hotels."

"What would people say? They knew that I was to marry John, and I did. I shall go with him. I never was a good girl, anyhow. I must be a trial to you to the last."

And then Justina hobbled in, that ill-omened soul who read my fate, but could not ward off the shadow she saw over me. She put her wrinkled arms around me and drew me to the sofa.

"Chica come to her old nurse; her mother, Justina." She cooed over me, stroking my burning forehead. "She is so wild-eyed and ill, my pretty, she does not know. Lay your silky curls on old Justina's breast. She love you, oh, so dear, and cared for you—my baby. Will you come to her poor home and let her guard you?"

"For to-night," said Aunt Marg hopefully. "John, let me take her there, if only until to-morrow. It will give us time to think."

"She shall not go to that hovel," he cried; "she must stay here."

"I will go," I said; "I am so queer in my head. I can't think, but I love Justina. She saved my baby life. I wish she had not now, or anyone. I wish I had died when you carried me on the big horse, John. If you take me away from her," as he came to me and took my hand, "it will be a crime, John, for I am not myself. I don't know what I am doing. Play I am your baby, Chica, and take me away, Justina; away from making Mrs. Scott and Aunt Marg cry, and from him that I love."

"I smooth your forehead, so, Chica," murmured Justina, "and you always sleep when you little baby. Now your pretty eyes close."

She kept rubbing my forehead, and I ceased to think any more, but I felt, after a time, that someone lifted me gently and placed me in a carriage, and afterwards I saw the dim-lit room in that poor hut on the sand, and the same strong arms were laying me on Justina's bed.

"In my wedding gown," I cried; "Justina said it was a shroud."

"Do not drive me to despair," said his voice, but I had no pity nor tenderness. I lay there and looked at the stars in the black, black sky. Aunt Marg came to bathe my head and fuss over me, and I—I almost hated her. I stretched out my hand to Justina, and she held it tight, crouching by my side. I must have slept even in my misery. I think they gave me some draught, for it was grey morning when I began to realise again. Justina was talking with someone at the door, and Aunt Marg, worn out, slept in the other room by the table.

"You have bought Justina. She is a Mexican," I said, sitting up.

"Well, why not?" said John. He came in with a big fur cloak on his arm and wrapped me in it. "I would buy her if it took my fortune. Now, drink this brandy. You are better; your colour is coming; you will understand by-and-bye; you are dazed yet. You will come with me?"

"My grandfather said you were such a good man. If you say I must go, it is right, I suppose; but I am very tired of all this. If I could die it would be settled. Your mother will be so angry."

"Will you ever be yourself again?" he said with a sob. "Oh, my broken lily, my pretty child! What can you do here? If I leave you, you will be so miserable, and I—I have not the strength to do it."

"May I not bid Margaret good-bye?" I said, and my voice seemed to belong to somebody else; "but she will be angry about my going."

"You cannot bear another scene, dearest. We will come back some day when all is well, and you are my own wife in their sight as well as the world's."

Bruce was waiting outside with the carriage, and I fancied he looked at me with stern disapproval. I think John saw it, for he gave his order to drive to the docks in a sharp voice, and slammed the carriage door.

Digitized by Google

"Leave me to myself," I said, and I leaned my head by the window where the soft moist air from the sea blew across my face. I heard the wheels rattle over the planks; then John lifted me out on the wharf. What a curious grey world it was, everything dripping and cold, the masts of the vessels black and shining, the grey water rolling against the piers, and faint and ghostly voices of sailors coming out of the fog, or the rattle of cordage and clank of oars.

A small man, compactly built, wearing a short peajacket, came out of the greyness toward us. I fancied I smelled tobacco, and there was something familiar in the way the figure waved the black pipe with its left hand. Then, suddenly and rudely, my curious mood was shattered by a voice that went to my heart, sent the sluggish blood away from my brain, and made me think again.

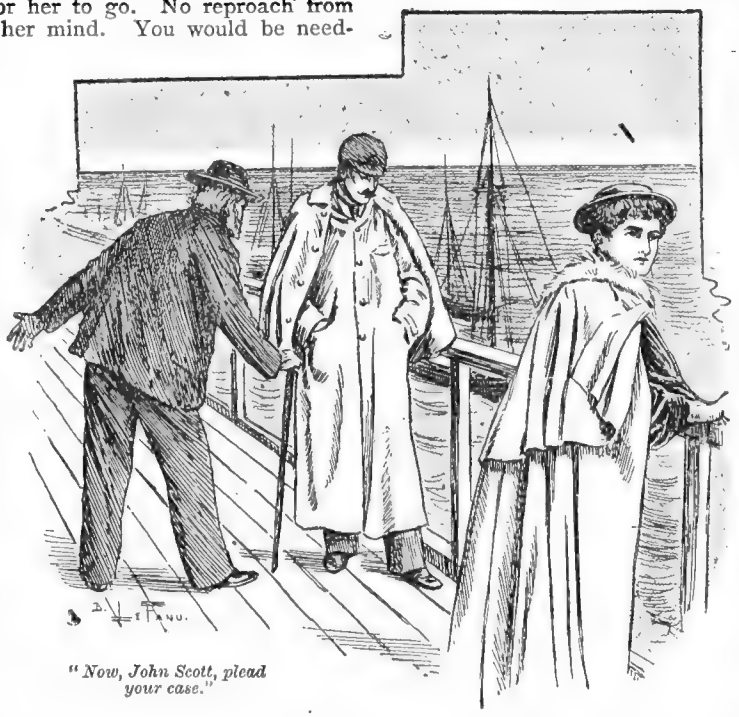
"I want a word with my granddaughter, Letty Lombard, Mr. John Scott, afore she goes away with a married man."

CHAPTER XVIII.

"THERE is nothing you can say to Letty that has not already been said," John cried angrily. "My yacht is waiting for us. She has agreed to leave the decision to me. I say that it is right for her to go. No reproach from you will make her change her mind. You would be needlessly cruel."

"Not so cruel as you," said my grandfather sternly; "for you know what you are doing and she don't. I thought you were a good man, John, and all her young days I brought her up to think so; little did I dream it would lead to such trouble as this. You're not fair nor manly, John, taking that child away from her home, and you know it. Letty," and he grasped my arm.

"Letty I once used to think you weren't a good girl, light-thoughted and easy to lead, of no stability nor truth, but as years went on I got to know you. I 'most leaned on you as to a tall young sapling; I grew to love you. Keep to my idea of you and take the better way. Give me comfort of one of my son's children."



"Now, John Scott, plead your case."

"How do I know the better way?" I asked doubtfully, still in that queer dream.

"With me, my love," John whispered close to me.

"The happiest way to you now will be the saddest one in time to come," said my grandfather solemnly. "No woman can outlive a stain on her honour. It crops up in buried letters; in idle tales of old folks like me; it is a haunting ghost that will not stay in its grave; some day a child may ask and know, Letty. It isn't for a few years, but always. I never had no comfort with my wife. She wasn't of my nation nor nature, and your father was diff'rent from the Lombards. Katherine gave me only misery; but I do love you, my bright-eyed girl. God knows I do, the sunshine of my home. Love for human kind woke up in me, after I'd kept from it a quarter of a century. Mebbe you made play of me; taught me to love you, to turn away from me like this. Can you take pleasure, make merry, over the misery of an honest old man? Letty, can any future be bright to you after this appeal of mine?"

"I don't know what to do," I said drearily. I went away from both of them and stood by myself. Half idly, I watched the grey water dashing against the pier; I could not think yet.

"I took Katherine home," continued my grandfather bravely. "Someone must care for her. She is thought dead in Galveston, so I must take her away for fear of people's talk. If I go with her my stay will be short; I am a very old man, used to the beaten track of my days, and a change will be my death. She'd take no comfort from me, for I never liked her, nor she me; but you, Letty, you are not of her past. She don't imagine you even know any of it.

"I told her last night about your being alive, and such a dear girl, and I said you should take her to San Antonio an' be with her to the end. Her father was your father; save me, she is all of your kin. I would not ask Margaret Collier to care for Katherine. It would be terrible for them both, but I do ask her little sister. Make it a duty, a labour of love, Letty, and teach that wicked heart to repent. Smooth that dreadful death-bed, you whose hand is so gentle, whose ways are so womanly and so helpful. Let her learn to bless you as Captain Dana did. The wrong she did you, you never knew.

"Now, John Scott, plead your case if you can. Tell her what the world will say of her. Promise her, if you dare, such care and tenderness that the evil speech of the world will never reach her and break her heart. Promise her to save her from herself when she comes to reason once more, for my girl is a good woman, pure in heart. To such when the awakening comes there is but one way of escape from the torment of conscience—death by one's own hand."

"It is very hard," I muttered. I looked at John; he turned his face away, and I saw his broad chest heave.

"'He can say nothing to you now, Letty, see!" cried my grandfather triumphantly. "John, I pity you. Life hasn't treated you fairly. Mebbe the parting is not for long. It's only good-bye for a little time. Some day I'll write you Katherine is no more on earth to curse us, to make us doubt infinite wisdom, when good people die and are mourned, and she has lived so long. Then you can come back to Letty."

"I want you to understand," John said coldly to me, and he never even looked at me, "that if you leave me here our parting is for ever. I cannot suffer any more. I shall put you out of my life entirely. I can live out my life alone. I have for long years. There is no future for us two if you go with him. The minister married us last night. You are my wife in my eyes. You promised me to love and honour me. Because a dead woman came to life is no reason we should be miserable for ever."

"I am glad that you said honour, John," I faltered, "for I realise that some day I should not honour you. I would reproach you bitterly. That is woman's way, when her heart tells her she is wrong, and she wakes to find herself false to all goodness and purity. If our parting is for all the future, I still say good-bye."

"He will come back to you," said my grandfather hopefully.

"I understand now," said John coldly. "I would not have one word of mine influence you. I dreamed you were an ideal woman, such as men have died for. I thought you a nobler creature than your kind. I find the first flaw of adversity frightens you. You fly to the shelter of narrow doctrine and empty words that mean nothing to love. You thrust

Digitized by Google

away duty, forget our love, and talk of caring for a hag who would have left you to die in your helpless babyhood.

"Women cannot love! A few have, and their memories are bright and beautiful, still held in men's hearts; but you and all your kind are the shallow little brooks that babble all day in sunshine, and disappear in drought. I fancy, when the scales were gone from my eyes, I should have hated you, or at best, wearied of you, as men do of narrow women and narrow minds. Good-bye, little girl; that was all a farce last night, a comedy this morning. It is better so."

"How sorely you will repent all this, John," cried my grandfather, "when this dear child is lost to you, and must go on her sad round of duty and labour, without one kind memory of you she loved. There is your yacht, John; I hope you'll sail now and try her no more. I never knew a brave man could be so cruel, so cowardly before. Every word you said struck her like a blow, and yet she has no word of rebuke for you. Her little gentle heart will forgive all, forget all. She is a woman and like all her kind, and I am proud of her for that. She loves you; she wants to honour you, and so she says 'good-bye'; there is no love where there is no respect. I am an old man, and I have learned that, and it's worth living all the years to know."

"I am quite ready to go," said John quietly. He gave some directions to Bruce, then turned to me and held out his hand. "Good-bye, dear; I hope and pray we shall never meet again. It would be best for you. There is no legal tie between us. I will be your brother, as I was, ready to aid you always, but never into my life shall love come again."

"You are my husband," I said steadily. "Ah, I do love. I can love. I gave all my affection to you. I was so starved all my life. It would be so fair, so blessed a thing to go with you; I cannot like Katherine. I almost fear I shall hate her; but something in my heart tells me to do right. I never was good and calm like other women. I was always doing things that grieved people who cared for me. I was wilful and thoughtless, but some lost chord in my nature is touched.

"That you shall not," said Aunt Marg in a passion.

"I want our love to be good, John; that is all the love that endures. You shall not drive me out of your heart. I will haunt you always, a poor little wan-eyed ghost. I will come to you in your dreary hours, at sea—on shore; I will summon you from your dreams; you shall feel my head resting on your heart. If I die, my spirit will call you in its flight. I will keep you and win you back every time you thrust me away. Take my wedding ring—my wife's ring, and I no wife.

"You pity me, John. You are crying. Is it not hardest for me? Some day you will put it on my finger again." I took his hand and laid it against my face. "Will you not, John?" I said, and he, with a sob, stooped and kissed me, then, pushing me away almost rudely, rapidly walked to the end of the pier.

I heard the rattle of cordage, the creak of taut sails, and then, as the fog lifted, in the roseate dawn, we saw the yacht, a great white-winged bird, speeding to the Mexican coast. We drove home in silence, grandfather and I, but as the carriage stopped at the gate I said:

"If Cinderella has lost her Prince, she is not going to sit in ashes; no moping martyr is a brave one; you and I will keep our secret, only you can comfort me once in a while."

"Miss Vi'let," said Bruce hesitatingly, "'tain't none ob my affair, I knows, but I has to tell yo' yo' done mighty proper an' right, an' I know de doctor looking down from Heben say so, an'll bring Mars John back to yo' some day; dem trifflin' wimmin like de fust Mrs. John Scott ain't no comfort to nobody." He drove off rapidly, fearing he had said too much; and Bruce tries at least to keep his place, but being in the family so long, he thinks he has a right to an opinion occasionally.

I crept upstairs to take off my wedding gown, and Liz, her face swollen with crying, helped me. I smoothed the soft silken folds, as I laid it away. "I thought to be so happy, Liz," I said, and only a little ghost of a sob came, but she could not trust herself to speak; she had to go down and slam the kitchen door to ease her feelings.

"Go now and get the tickets, grandfather," I said; "I cannot live here another day in the ashes of my hopes."

He put his hands on my shoulders. "Can you bear it anyway, Letty? That white, set look on your face ain't naterel. You'll break under the burden on you; consumptives is so long a-dying."

"Don't think of that, dear. I would not shorten her life one moment. She needs so long to be better in, and think how little I have done for any of you for all your kindness to me. My day of reckoning has come and I am so happy. I never thought I could do you any good." Before I finished my sentence Aunt Marg came in, and whether her look on seeing me was of relief or regret I could not tell.

"Justina said you had gone with John," she cried.

"I came back. Grandfather showed me my duty."

"What is your duty?"

"To care for—my—sister Katherine," I stammered.

"That you shall not," said Aunt Marg in a passion, her face pallid, her eyes blazing; "you, a white-souled girl, in daily, hourly contact with a woman like her. Captain Lombard, you must be in your dotage to think of such a thing. I have some rights you must respect; Letty shall not go."

"Don't you try to warp your nature, Margaret Collier," said grandfather severely. "You are a good woman, but narrow, and such are often more a power for evil than for good. Seems like I was looking at folks through the big end of a telescope, they're shrinking so."

"I have made up my mind to care for her, Aunt Marg," I pleaded. "You must see there is no one else to go. If it breaks my heart, I will do my duty."

"Talk it over between ye," put in grandfather, hurrying away; he dreaded a family argument, man-like.

"Hearts do not break so easily," cried my aunt, with strange bitterness. "Nor will yours. What is your grief to mine? He has always loved you and will come back, but I have cared for him all my life, and he has never dreamed it. He might have liked me, grown to love me, but Katherine took him away in my girlhood.

"All these long years I have been forced to see his love for an ideal woman—a Katherine that never existed. What I would not do for myself I did for you, Letty—I shattered his idol. You, the little baby I saved, took his love away. You talk of heart-break! Think of me. Don't touch me; I have laid my soul bare to you, and I cannot forget. Go, do your duty, dear. You can forgive her better than I."

Digitized by Google

I bowed my head before my Aunt Margaret. I could have worshipped her as a saint. Oh, sorely tried, faithful, fond heart, is there any hereafter that repays your long years of loveless duty, the dreadful fate that made you—the gentlest among women—the witness against those assassins that made your life one long agony and terror? Too late I knew you and your inner life—too late to give you the love and gratitude I felt.

I left Aunt Marg, and went softly up to my room, where Katherine was still asleep. I noticed her waxen hands, her hollow cheeks, hidden by the tangled masses of her grey hair, her beautiful mouth half parted, as if she dreamed of some happy scene in her past. I wondered with a shudder what that past had been. Once I thought a life like that had some roses; all girls do when the glamour of genius in the narrator makes it so; now I realised there were only thorns.

I picked up her ragged garments from the floor, and from my scanty wardrobe brought others for her. She was about my size now. All my pretty gowns were at the big house, and I wanted never to see them again. They belonged to the dead Letty Lombard. The sun was shining on Katherine's face, and I went softly to lower the curtain.

"I am not asleep," she said, opening her great dark eyes. "I've been watching you. I don't like the dark; I always sleep with a light or the curtain up; and how hard it is to breathe when one's lungs are nearly gone. Come here."

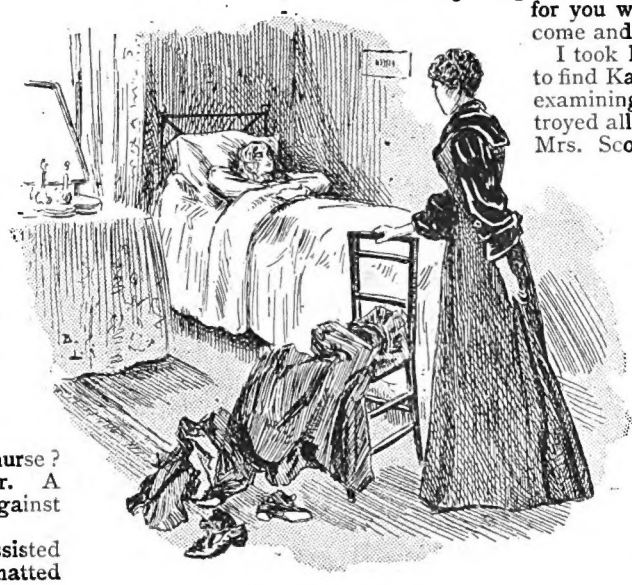
As I sat on the bed she lifted my hand. "It's smaller than mine. You have no rings, either. I used to have such pretty ones—all pawned. What size glove do you wear?"

"Five and a half." She was so odd. Imagine this was the first time she had ever seen me.

"Have you got any lovers?"

"No, I don't like to talk of men," I answered stiffly.

"Oh, that kind," she said pettishly, flinging my hand from her. "What kind of horrible penance has grandfather planned for me to have you for a nurse? Saint Margaret would be better. A young prim is such an offence against nature and youth."



Katherine was still asleep.

I did not speak but quietly assisted her to dress, brushing her matted hair, she often saying some very strange words, when I pulled it out of a tangle. I described Justina to her, and said she was going with us.

"I know Justina," she smiled, as if recalling some pleasant recollection. "What a skeleton I am, and I was so beautiful once. What poor clothes you've got. I looked in the closet last night. I suppose, though, you never wanted fine things. It don't go with the 'prim.'"

Still I did not speak. She was so helpless and weak, it took all my energies to dress her. She grew so exhausted I had to get her brandy twice; then I arranged a chair for her by the window, and Liz, looking very grumpy and cross, brought in her breakfast.

"This curse has come home to roost," said Katherine, "and I never saw her anything but mocking and merry, no matter how she suffered."

"I'd rather see de debbil in de house," muttered Liz, "an' good folks die an' yo' lib."

"Well, I'm nearly dead, if that will console you. Why is it you darkeys keep so young looking? You haven't changed a bit in twenty years."

"Yo' made nuff wrinkles in folkses faces," growled Liz.

"I like an honest hater. You don't bother me, Liz. And now, Miss Prim, get me out some sort of a bonnet, I lost mine on the beach. I lay out there all night, too weak to crawl further, found a bathing machine and stayed there until dark again. Then I got strength enough to get back to town, and hired a carriage to take me to John's house. Queer, you all being there. Your influence possibly. Mrs. Scott used to look down on grandfather. He said John educated you. His mother like you?"

"I—I think so."

"You look pretty when you colour like that. What eyes you've got! Your mother was only pink and white prettiness. You're quite *chic*. Margaret had a fine strong face, pity John had not married her; a solemn ass like him ought to be severely domestic, yet his life has been a regular romance."

I went out and left her trying to eat, but she could hardly touch a morsel. If I had stayed I should have broken down. Justina, quite gorgeously arrayed for travelling, met me in the hall. She was very cold and distant, because, I suppose, I did not go with John.

"If you had any moral sense, how I could love you, Justina," I said.

"Mebbe I'd better not go with Chica," she growled.

"You couldn't leave me, dear; and all your folks live in San Antonio. You must have a hundred cousins there."

"Chica want the money back?" she asked slyly.

"What John paid you? No. I think you deserve that, for you wanted to make me happy. Now come and see Katherine."

I took her upstairs, where I was pained to find Katherine staggering weakly about, examining my boxes. Luckily, I had destroyed all the relics of my girlhood. Then Mrs. Scott came to see me, and was so sweet and kind, I was glad I had taken the better way; to lose the love of good women shuts out the best of life. She told me she would send me things for Katherine's comfort.

"As I grow old I learn forgiveness and charity, dear," she said, "and I will wait in the big house for the coming of its mistress—my Violet. I know she will find her happiness some time."

She clung to me at parting, weeping bitterly; and then, sick at heart at the task before me, in bitter anger at the world that had been so cruel, I went up to my sister's room. She was lying on the bed, a half-emptied glass of brandy beside her, between her lips a cigarette; while Justina, lying at ease on the floor, was rolling another one in her long fingers.

(To be continued next week.)

NOT TO BE MISSED.

The new story by H. RIDER HAGGARD in *Pearson's Weekly*. Also a GRAND PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION with valuable money prizes.

Pearson's Weekly is the only paper which insures its readers against Burglary.

POSTAL RATES.

SHORT STORIES will be sent direct from these offices, post free, to any country within the Postal Union, at the following rates, prepaid:—

One Year	6s. 6d.
Half Year	3s. 3d.
Three Months	1s. 8d.

Printed and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON, at "Pearson's Weekly" Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

Digitized by Google

THE JOHN NOBLE HALF-GUINEA COSTUMES 10/6

NEW FASHIONABLE SHAPE

FOR SPRING, 1894.

A complete revolution in the cost of garments for Ladies' wear, being supplied **Direct from the Manufacturer to the Wearer** by means of the Parcel Post, at **less than half ordinary prices.**

Almost every paper in the United Kingdom has bestowed unlimited praise on these remarkable Costumes, which are made from **The John Noble Cheviot Serge** (Regd.), **a fabric of great durability and world-wide fame,** and supplied complete, as illustration, for the ridiculously low price of **10/6** each. Packed in Box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. *Colours: Navy, Brown, Grenat, Myrtle, Reseda, Black, or the fashionable shade of Tan.*

THIS SKETCH illustrates the latest improvements that have been made in the Ladies' Half-Guinea Costume, which now consists of the Wide Bell Skirt and improved Blouse Bodice. It is well made throughout, no slop work whatever being allowed. The Bodice is pleated back and front, has full fashionable sleeves, bound seams, and belt; the saddle and sleeves are well lined, and it can be worn inside or outside the skirt, which measures 40 ins. long. The lower part of the skirt, and the cuffs, collar, and saddle of bodice are trimmed with rows of narrow Black Russia Braid, the whole thus forming one of the neatest and most serviceable costumes ever introduced for Ladies' wear.

The sizes kept in stock will fit any figure up to 38 inches round the bust under arms. Larger or special sizes made to order at a cost of 1s. 6d. extra.

☞ *Don't make any mistake. John Noble's price,* **10/6,** *is not for the mere Dress Length, but for the Complete Costume made up and ready for immediate use.*

JOHN NOBLE, Ltd., The Warehouse, 11, Piccadilly, MANCHESTER.

ENAMELLED COPPER LETTERS.

Heraldic Designs and Trade Marks and Tradesmen's Windows, Facias, Signs, or Tablets.

SWINGING SIGNS IN GREAT VARIETY.

The Durability, Elegance, and Striking Brilliancy of these have earned for them the reputation of being the

MOST EFFECTIVE MEDIUM

of all kinds of Indoor and Outdoor Advertisements.

Call and see our Stock or send for Price Lists.

THE GARNIER ENAMELLED LETTER & ADVERTISING SIGN CO., Ltd.,

61, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, E.C.

(Near the Farringdon Road Station.)

INVENTORS AND MANUFACTURERS. *AGENTS WANTED.*

MUCH BETTER THAN STEEL AND PENNYROYAL.

OTTEY'S Unlabelled strong FEMALE PILLS Quickly and Certainly remove all obstructions, arising from any cause whatever. Invaluable for married women. Post free, under cover, for 14 and 33 stamps, from—
THOMAS OTTEY, Chemist, Burton-on-Trent.
Please mention this paper.

If you have

ECZEMA

OR A SKIN DISEASE OF ANY KIND, 1/6 invested at your Chemist or Store in a bottle of "Anteczema" will at once prove to you how easily and pleasantly it can be cured.

Valuable Book on the Skin free, from
THE ANTECZEMA COMPANY,
83, CASTLE ROAD, LONDON, N.W.

A BOON TO LADIES

Collins' Marvellous Female Remedy.

Mr. COLLINS [who was 30 years a member of the Royal College of Surgeons of England], will forward free of Charge, full PARTICULARS of a REMEDY, which during an extensive practice, both at home and in the Colonies, he has never known to fail in the most OBSTINATE CASES of OBSTRUCTION and IRREGULARITIES. Send addressed envelope for full particulars, and waste no more time and money on useless Pills and so-called Remedies, &c., which, in the majority of cases, are nothing but PURGATIVES, and cause SICKNESS, PROSTRATION, and PAIN, without having the desired effect.

Letters to be addressed—

D. COLLINS,
GOTHIC HOUSE, 9, ERSKINE STREET, LIVERPOOL.

MELVILLE'S

New Upright

GRAND PIANOFORTE

26 GUINEAS (*Net Cash Price*).

This Piano is confidently recommended as the very best instrument ever produced at the money. For beauty and resonance of sound, for delicacy and brilliancy of touch, for exquisite modulation and the perfection of workmanship it cannot be excelled. It has all the latest improvements, including entire Iron Frame (suspended), Harmonic Bar, Best Check Action, Double Covered Machine Hammers, Bushed Keys, &c., Marqueterie or Chased Gilt Embossed Panels and Gilded Bracket Trusses. Supplied in Walnut, Rosewood, or Ebonised, and the net cash price is 26 Guineas. Inspection and trial is invited.

MELVILLE,

61, Charing Cross Road, London.

NEW HARRISON SWIFT GOLD MEDAL

KNITTER

Knits STOCKINGS (ribbed or plain) GLOVES and CLOTHING in WOOL, SILK, or COTTON. INSTRUCTIONS FREE. Lists 2d. per post. TRIUMPHANT AWARD at PARIS. The only WINNER in the WORLD of 4 GOLD MEDALS and 22 other Honours.

HARRISON KNITTING MACHINE CO.,
Works: 48, Upper Brook St., Manchester.

TOWLE'S PENNYROYAL & STEEL PILLS FOR FEMALES.

QUICKLY CORRECT ALL IRREGULARITIES, REMOVE ALL OBSTRUCTIONS and RELIEVE the distressing SYMPTOMS so prevalent with the sex. Boxes 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. (the latter size contains three times the quantity), of all Chemists, or will be sent anywhere on receipt of 15 or 34 stamps, by the maker,

E. T. TOWLE, Chemist, NOTTINGHAM.
Beware of Imitations injurious and worthless.

RUBBER STAMPS

FREE BY POST.

AGENTS WANTED

Liberal commissions.

Your MONOGRAM, 2 letters 1/2; 3 letters or Name in full, 1/3, including Box, Pad, & Ink, for Paper or Indelible Marking Ink for linen. All kinds of stamps. Illustrated Lists free.

S. S. Ireton & Co., Ltd.,
92, Gracechurch St., London, E.C.

A Real Boon to Ladies.

TO LADIES Especially to those who wish to know of a safe, certain, and speedy remedy for all irregularities and obstructions, a remedy which, under the most trying circumstances and in the most difficult and OBSTINATE CASES, NEVER FAILS TO AFFORD RELIEF, GENERALLY IN A FEW HOURS. No case hopeless, failure is simply impossible, as Mrs. Snow, of Denmark Hill, Camberwell, writes:—"By adopting your treatment my anxiety and misery was over within twenty-four hours, although I had been daily taking pills and other things in vain. Half the quantity you sent proved effective, to my intense joy and surprise. A sworn guarantee is enclosed with all testimonials and medicine, which is inexpensive, as one bottle at 4s. 6d. (by post, 4s. 9d.) is usually sufficient for any case. Full particulars will be gladly forwarded to any lady on receipt of addressed envelope.

Write privately to—
Mrs. S. S. S.,
145, STOCKWELL ROAD,
LONDON, S.W.

MADAME FRAIN'S

FAMOUS MIXTURE.

The most powerful and effective on earth.

For the most obstinate cases. Will not injure the most delicate. Price 7s. 6d. (Strongest, 11s. per bottle); post free, 6d. extra. HERBAL INSTITUTE, 13, Hackney Road (opposite Shoreditch Church), London, N.E. Send at once stamped directed envelope for particulars and proofs. I will forfeit £100 for every testimonial that is not genuine and they can be seen at any time.

MASON'S
EXTRACT OF HERBS

For the Immediate Production of

BOTANIC BEER.

A Nine-gallon Cask of Alcoholic Beer from a Brewery will cost you 10/6, but Eight Gallons of Beer made from

MASON'S EXTRACT OF HERBS

Can be obtained for 6d., plus a pound or two of Sugar and a little Yeast.

THE FINEST BEVERAGE IN THE WORLD.

Inventors and Manufacturers:

NEWBALL & MASON,
Hyson Green Works,
NOTTINGHAM.

If unable to obtain it in your neighbourhood, send 9 stamps for sample bottle; or samples of both Wine Essence and Extract of Herbs, post free for 15 stamps.

PALACE STEAMERS. PARIS AND BACK FOR A GUINEA. BOULOGNE AND BACK for 10s. 6d.

LA MARGUERITE. FINEST and FASTEST STEAMER in the WORLD. SPEED, 25 MILES AN HOUR.

BOULOGNE and BACK DAILY (Tuesdays only excepted), by LA MARGUERITE.

PARIS and BACK, Saturday to Monday for 21s., other days 26s. return, By LA MARGUERITE.

MARGATE and BACK, DAILY (Tuesdays only excepted).

SIX HOURS ASHORE AT MARGATE for 5s. 6d. by LA MARGUERITE.

Passengers can Return by the ROYAL SOVEREIGN at their option.

Cook's Hotel Coupon Tickets may be obtained for all places.

TIMES OF SAILINGS (Weather and other circumstances permitting).

Leaving	Week days.	Sundays.
FENCHURCH STREET (by Special Train to Tilbury Pier) ..	8.38 ..	8.55
TILBURY (Gravesend) ..	9.30 ..	10. 0
	Noon.	p.m.
Margate .. About	12. 0 ..	12.30
Arriving.	p.m.	
Boulogne .. „	2.30 ..	3. 0
Returning.	p.m.	p.m.
Boulogne .. „	3.30 ..	3.30
Margate .. „	6. 0 ..	6. 0
TILBURY (Special Train awaits Steamer) .. „	8.45 ..	8.45

Arriving at Fenchurch Street Station (City) 9.35 p.m.

All passengers disembark at Tilbury and travel by train to Fenchurch Street.

MARGATE, RAMSGATE, and Back, by ROYAL SOVEREIGN, DAILY, at 9.30 a.m. (except Fridays, on which day LA MARGUERITE will run as usual), from Old Swan Pier, London Bridge, calling at S. Woolwich and Tilbury. Train Fenchurch Street Station 10.28 a.m. in connection. Tender steamer Greenwich 9.25, Blackwall 9.35 a.m. Margate Passengers can return by LA MARGUERITE.

YARMOUTH and LOWESTOFT by Palace Steamer VICTORIA, from Harwich DAILY (Fridays excepted), at 3.0 p.m., in connection with the Koh-i-Noor, from Old Swan Pier, at 9.10 a.m. Return tickets available for season except as above.

Offices—33, KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON BRIDGE, E.C.

VICTORIA STEAMERS. (Weather and other circumstances permitting.)

CLACTON, HARWICH, and Back, YARMOUTH, LOWESTOFT, IPSWICH, and FELIXSTOWE, by KOH-I-NOOR DAILY (Fridays excepted), from Old Swan Pier at 9.10 a.m., calling at S. Woolwich and Tilbury. Train Fenchurch Street 10.15 a.m. in connection. Tender Greenwich 9.25 a.m., Blackwall 9.35 a.m.

ROSHERVILLE GARDENS and GRAVESEND from Old Swan Pier, at 10.0 a.m. and 3.0 p.m. DAILY (except Friday), calling at Greenwich, Blackwall, and S. Woolwich.

HAMPTON COURT, by CARDINAL WOLSEY, DAILY, at 10.0 a.m., from Old Swan Pier.

KEW GARDENS, BATTERSEA, and GREENWICH PARKS, frequently.

Offices—VICTORIA HOUSE, LAURENCE POUNTNEY LANE, E.C.

Price 7s. 6d. for any Size up to 40 inches.

POST FREE U.K.

"MINNOW" LIFE BELT

Trade Mark. FOR

LADIES, GENTLEMEN, and CHILDREN.

The Belt will support three men with their clothes on, can be inflated in a few seconds, and is so constructed that in the event of accidents the wearer is turned in a floating position, with the face well out of the water. It weighs a few ounces only, can be conveniently carried in the pocket, is made of the strongest material, nothing to get out of order, will bear a pressure of 2 to 300 lbs. and withstand any climate. Parents can with perfect confidence allow their children to bathe without fear of danger. Used by yachting and canoeing clubs, fishermen, and bathers all over the world. Worn as an ordinary belt. State size of waist. Cash to accompany all orders. Cheques and P.O.'s to be crossed "Bank of Liverpool."

The following, one of the many Testimonials received, speaks for itself:—

New Brighton Sailing Club, June 13, 1894.

Dear Sir,—It may interest you to know that we had practical illustration of the efficacy of your "Minnow" Life Belts last evening. We were struck by a heavy squall and upset whilst racing, but having, in accordance with our club rules, life belts on, in this case of your make, we suffered nothing but a little inconvenience, such as naturally arises from getting wet, and this even was partial, as your belts floated us so high, that, we were practically dry from a little above the waist up.

Yours truly, J. F. JELLICO, "Dever," N.B.S.C.

ADDRESS ORDERS TO

W. R. HARGREAVES, Waterloo, near Liverpool.

NEW DEPARTURE IN INSURANCE.

The Independent Order of Foresters

Gives Life Assurance at Rates slightly above actual cost—that is, at less than half the usual charges of Life Assurance Companies. The Premiums are based upon "The Combined Experience Table," which was prepared by a Committee of Eminent Actuaries from the Experience of Seventeen British Life Offices. This Table of EXAMPLES gives the Cost for £400; the Average Premiums of Insurance Companies; the RATES of the I.O.F.; and the SAVING EFFECTED BY JOINING THE ORDER.

Age last Birthday.	The Combined Experience Table Per Year.	£400. Average Cost of £400 in British Assurance Companies Per Year.	I.O.F. Table of Premiums Per Year.	Annual Saving to Members of the I.O.F.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
21	3 1 6	8 1 4	3 12 0	4 9 4
25	3 4 10	8 16 4	3 16 0	5 0 4
30	3 10 4	10 0 4	4 0 0	6 0 4
35	3 17 6	11 9 4	4 12 0	6 17 4
40	4 6 4	13 6 4	5 0 0	8 6 4
45	5 1 10	15 13 8	6 0 0	9 13 8
49	6 12 10	18 3 4	7 16 0	10 7 4

The full sum assured is payable at death. All premium-paying of ordinary members in the I.O.F. ceases at 70 years of age, when one-tenth of the amount assured is paid to them annually, the unexhausted balance being payable at death. The entrance fees are very moderate, a £100 policy costing 17s.; £200, £1 16s. 6d.; £400, £2 3s.; £600, £2 9s. 6d.; £800, £2 16s.; and £1,000, £3 5s. Court Dues (10s. to 12s. per annum) have to be paid by each member.

The Accumulated Funds amount to £160,000, of which £20,000 has been deposited with the British Government. Every claim has been paid within ten days, £328,000 having thus been paid during the last eleven years.

CHIEF OFFICE FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM:

24, CHARING CROSS, WHITEHALL, LONDON;

Office for Scotland:—217, BUCHANAN STREET, GLASGOW.

Where Prospectuses and Forms of Application for Membership may be obtained.

Digitized by Google